

From the Editor's Desk

|| Srih ||



Namaste,

We just had the aradhana of the saint poet Sri. Tyagaraja at Tiruvaiyaru.

I'm extremely happy to share the full version of Sri T. S . Parthasarathy's article on the saint. Sri TSP was a great scholar and musicologist whose narratives have been published regularly in the Music academy journals. Enjoy reading!

The Poetry of Tyagaraja

If Tyagaraja had not been the versatile musical genius he was but had presented his compositions to the world as devotional or didactic songs, would he still enjoy the same reputation he does today in the realm of Kamatak musics Had his pieces not been such marvels of coalescence of art music and melodic richness but were mere hymns clothed in simple but lilting melodies (like his Utsava Sampradaya Kritis and Divya NamaKirtallas) , would he yet be deemed eligible for the place of honour he occupies in the musical worlds The answer to both these questions is in the affirmative. Although Tyagaraja was, first and foremost, a musical composer and a creator of new expressions and forms in music, the fact that he was a competent poet and a master of felicitous expression has added great charm to his compositions and made them virtually "poems set to music". He is often referred to as the 'tone-poet of Tiruvaigaru'. For a similar reason, Kshetrajna became immortal even though he composed only one type of musical composition, the padam. Tyagaraja's Kritis are rightly renowned for their poetic excellence, sublimity of thought and unsurpassed yati and prasa (caesura and alliteration) beauties not found in the compositions of any other South Indian composer. The perfect integration of the sahitya with the music of his pieces was accomplished because of his inherent poetic faculty and impassioned feeling expressed in imaginative verse.

The beauty of the language to which music is set has a great deal todo with the permanence and popularity of the music. The language of song, however, differs from the language of poetry and the diction of a vaggeyakara is bound to differ from that of a poet. We can see this difference clearly if we compare the slokas of the Gita Govinda in which ashtapadi songs figure. Jayadeva adopts a distinctly different style for the ashtapadis, which are intended to be sung to a given tala. The diction most suited for music has to be euphonious and composed of words which are soft, flowing and melodious, with no harsh or discordant combination of syllables to grate upon the ear. The songs of Tyagaraja are unrivalled for their sweetness, musical beauty and their simple language. Moreover, the sentiments of the songs, philosophical and ethical, and the profundity of his meditation have endowed his kritis with such rare merit that many Telugu scholars read them for the sheer delight of reciting them without any concern for their complicated tunes or intricate talas.

Tyagaraja displays considerable poetic gifts within his limited scope as avaggeyakara or composer of music. Among the celebrated major composers of Karnatak music, he is, perhaps, the only one who can be called a poet barring Kshetrajna, who stands as a class by himself. There is a school of thought among Telugu scholars that maintains that Kshetrajna composed his padams as lakshyas to the lakshanas of the various types of nayakas and nakas is enumerated in a Telugu work called the Sringara Rasa Manjari. Tyagaraja revels equally in gorgeous descriptions of heaven and the celestial beauty of the Lord who resides there as in his pen picture of the village Tiruvaiyaru (of his time) and the river Kaveri which flows nearby. Doraleuna in Bilahari is one of the pieces in which Tyagaraja excels himself in describing in ornate language the abode of his God with angels and liberated souls enjoying the supreme bliss of His presence. The three charanas of this kriti comprise a rapturous outpouring which will dispel all doubts regarding Tyagaraja's mastery over Telugu idiom and the grandeur of his poetic conception. The first of these charanas which gives a description of Heaven and the Lord who resides therein bears this out:

*Tumburu Naradulu suguna
kirtanambula nalapamu seyaga
Ambariska mukhyulu namamu
seyaga jajulu pai challaga
Bimbadarulagu surauara yali venulu
natyamu ladaga
Ambujabhava pakaru lim gadala
navaya birudaualini bogadaga
Ambaravasa satulu kara kankanambulu
ghallani visaraga maniha
rambulu gadalaga nuচে phanitalpambuna
nalakonna harini ganugona.....*

In a few kritiis, we are able to see that Tyagaraja was not merely a writer of conventional devotional verse with a command over the diction peculiar to music composers but was quite at home in describing the beauties of nature. The kriti, *Sari vedalina* in Asavari is an artistic little piece which will do credit to any poet. Tyagaraja describes the river Kaveri as "an undefiled virgin flowing now in torrents, now as a roaring rapid and now as a tranquil and compassionate stream."

*Duramuna noka taunna garjana
bhikara
moka tavuna nindu karunato
Niratantuoa noka tavuna naduchuchu
Vara Kaver! Kanyakamani,*

*Iduleni malaya marutamuche
Gudina Kaveri tatamandu
Sakala sugandharaja sumamulu
Salalitamagu kokila nadammulu
Imahilo sogasaina chola simayandu
Varamaina Panchanadapura,*

Affectionately chiding Rama for developing hauteur after being installed in his house at Tiruvaiyaru, Tyagaraja in the kriti, *Muripemuin Mukhari* gives us a poetic description of his home town with "its matchless breeze, fragrant flowers and the sweet music of koels which make it the most delightful place on earth to live in."

It is clear from Tyagaraja's own description of a kriti in the song *Sogasuga Mridanga* that he conceived of a kriti as a poetic composition not only in form but also in substance. The description is delicious:

*Yati visrama sad bhakti virati
draksharasa navarasa
yuta kritiche bhajyinchu
yukti Tyagarajuniki tarama.*

"A kriti should have yati (caesura), visrama (repose) sad-bhakti(devotion), virati (pause) and all the nine rasas." The former are the requirements of prosody and the rasas are the sine qua non of any poetical composition.

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There is no written or oral tradition to indicate the extent of Tyagaraja's scholarship and his proficiency in Telugu and Sanskrit, but a scrutiny of his kritis and padyas shows that he was competent in handling Telugu verse and was a good scholar in Sanskrit. As he spent almost his entire life in Tamil-speaking areas, it would perhaps be presumptuous to suppose that he had a mastery over the classics (maha kavyas) in Telugu but tradition has it that he was performing daily parayana of the Andhra Bhagavatam by Potana. There is no doubt that Tyagaraja was deeply influenced by Potana when he started composing verse in simple Telugu without any pedantry or straining after effect. Telugu scholars vouch for the fact that the language of his kritis reminds them of verses in the Potana Bhagavatam. Tyagaraja does not hesitate to imitate the style of his illustrious forbear nor to borrow ideas from him. The kriti "Ennaga manasuku rani" in Nilambari, occurring in his opera Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam, is based mainly on two sisa padyas figuring in the seventh kandham of Potna Bhagavatam commencing with, the words "Kamalaksha narchinchu karamulu karamulu".

Ennaga manasukurani

Pannaga sayi sogasu

Pannuga ganugonani

Kannulele Kanti minnulele


*is obviously inspired by Potana's verses in the
Bhagavatam.*

Kamalakshu narchinchu karamulu karamulu

Srinathu varinchu jilva jilva.

Strangely enough, many of Tyagaraja's longer pieces (except the Pancha ratna kritis) are to be found not in praise of Lord Rama, but praise of the different Goddesses worshipped by him during his pilgrimage to various shrines. His kritis in praise of Dharmasamvardhani of Tiruvaiyaru, Pravridha Srimati of lalgudi and Tripurasundari of Tiruvottiyur are outpourings with a truly poetic ring about them. In the kriti Sundari Ninu in Arabhi on Goddess Tripurasundari, he revels in poetic fervour in comparing Her face to the moon, Her majesty to the mountain Meru, Her splendour to the lightning and so on.

Similar descriptions are found in Darini telusu konti in Suddha saveri and Vidhi sakradulaku in Yamuna kalyani.



*Kalakalamanu mukha kalalanu gani
Kaluvaia raju bhumi ki radaye
Chelagu ni lavanyamunu gani
Yalanade Valaraju ganaka poye
Niluvaramagu ni gambhiramunu gani
Jalaraju jada veshudaye
Balamaina dhiratvamuni gani
Kanakachaludu ta silarupudaye*

A correct assessment of Tyagaraja as a poet can perhaps be made only after a thorough study of his two operas Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam and Nowka Charitram. In these two works we see quite a different facet of the genius of Tyagaraja. It is in these musical plays that he has dispelled all doubts regarding his competence to write verse. A scrutiny of these reveals his easy mastery over all the common metres of Telugu poetry like sisa padyas, kandapadyas, divipadas, utpalamala, champakallala and sardulavikritditan: and also darus, dandakam and gadya. He also exhibits remarkable skill in working up a climax by means of a long padya, ,culminating in a kriti of chiseled beauty in a raga most appropriate for the situation.

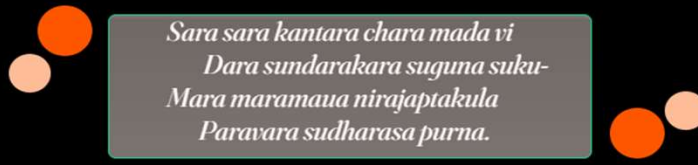
In the kriti Chudare Chelulara in pantuvarali in his opera Nowka Charitram he gives a gorgeous description of the river Yamuna flowing near Gokulam:

"Bees hover around pink lotuses being wafted by the breeze on the dark blue waters of the Yamuna dotted with sand dunes white in colour. The steps look as if they have been paved with diamonds. Swans swim on the rippling waters. The bowers are full of vine with multi-coloured parrots feasting on the grapes. The cuckoos sing in the trees and Cupid is busy aiming his flowerdarts at men and women".

He prefixes this kriti with a long explanatory verse in Sardulavikritiditam thus :-

*Valayambuga nataladuchu jelu-
Varninchuchun neguchun
Alolambagu. pushpa vrishamulto
Hamsi samuhambuto
Gilalambuna bhrtnga nada yutamou
Kendammi brundambuto
Galambhodhara diptitoda jelage
Galindinin ganchuchun*

Although the verses and other passages in pure Sanskrit composed by Tyagaraja do not fall under the category of poetry, a scrutiny of them and his kritis in Sanskrit reveals his remarkable command over the language. Tradition is again lacking regarding his exact scholarship in Sanskrit, but his pieces do not leave us in any doubt about his mastery over Sanskrit diction in his role as a music composer. In kritis like Jagadananda Karaka and Vata Lila Galla Lola (*divya nama*) he uses rare Sanskrit words with telling sound effects and indulges in ingenious and difficult compounds. He can also, at the same time, write easy-flowing passages like the Sanskrit charanas of the kriti Ni Daya Ravale in Todi producing striking effects of the second-letter rhyme (*dvitīyakshara prasa*) which he invariably uses in his compositions.



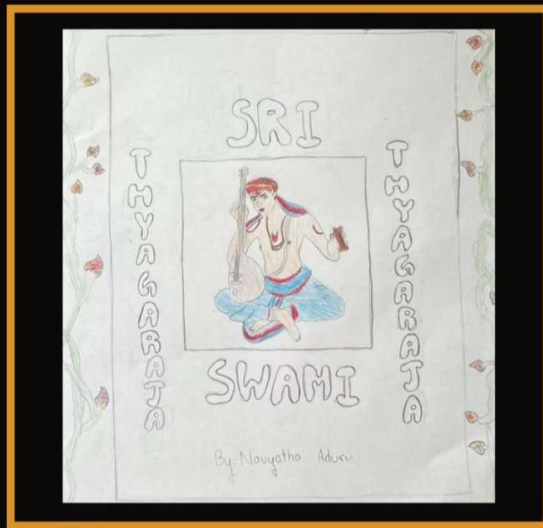
*Sara sara kantara chara mada vi
Dara sundarakara suguna suku-
Mara maramaua nirajaptakula
Paravara sudharasa purna.*

As a matter of fact, a thorough study of his Sanskrit pieces will greatly benefit anyone who desires to improve his knowledge of that language. In short, we have in Tyagaraja a rare combination of a musical genius who could clothe his beautiful creations in art music in equally beautiful language, thus making them a perennial source of inspiration and delight to generations of music lovers. One can say of him what Ramesh Chandra Dutt wrote about Jayadeva "in his compositions the Sanskrit loses its august stiffness and assumes more than Italian softness."

Sandhya Anand

Director of Samskrta Sangitam School of Music

Sri Thyagaraja Art Work By Students



Navyatha Aduru



Sharada Mahadevan

Music needs to be in life because it is Goddess Saraswati and when anything makes a sound then it's music because sound is in music. Also when we talk, we talk in a tone and tone is also in singing. Music reminds me of peace, cheerful, happy, Goddess Saraswati, learning and sound.





Tyagaraja Swami and his Divine Connections - Kriti on various Gods and we can scan the QR code to listen to his Kriti.



Tyagaraja Swami's biography in a nutshell - His life, Pancharatna Kriti and Aradhana across the world with pictures.



Aarabhi Rajeshkumar



A sketch of Shri Tyagaraja swami with prominent Kriti around flowing through.



Saket Ashok



Student Scribe

Miracles in life of Sri Thiyagarajar

Sadhguru Sri Thiyagarajar was born in Thiruvaiyaru, a small town from TamilNadu. He is revered as the first among Sangeetha Moomoorthigal. Other two being Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Sri Syama Sastrigal. Sri Thiyagarajar learnt compositions of Sri Ramadasar and Sri Purandaradasar from his mother at a very small age. When he was 11 years old, he was given Raama Naama Deeskha and Raama vighram by his father.

From then, he started chanting Raama Naama daily and offering pooja to Raama Vighraha. He used to chant 125000 times daily and he completed chanting 9 million times when he was 38 years old. There were various miracles which happened in his life. Let's see some of them.

Miracle 1:

Sri Thiyagarajar used to teach Carnatic songs to kids and receive rice and dal from the students. One day, he didn't receive any food to cook and eat, so went to bed hungry. After sometime, he heard a knock in the door, when he opened, he saw a old man, his wife and a servant standing outside.

The old man mentioned that they have walked a very long distance and they wanted to take rest for the night. Sri Thiyagarajar invited them with due respect, and offered to make dinner for them, however the old man mentioned that they have food for all of them, and his servant would prepare the same. Once, the dinner was prepared, they all ate together, and Sri Thiyagarajar spent rest of the night talking to the old couple. Next day morning, the old couple and the servant started continuing the journey. When they left Sri Thiyagarajar's house, Sri Thiyagarajar saw that the old couple changed to Sri Rama and Seetha devi and the servant was Lakshmanar. He was very shocked and surprised that Lord Rama came all the way to meet him in person. There is a belief that when people chant Raama Naama 9 million times, they would have the vision of Lord Raama and Sri Thiyagarajar was a real time example for the same.

Miracle 2:

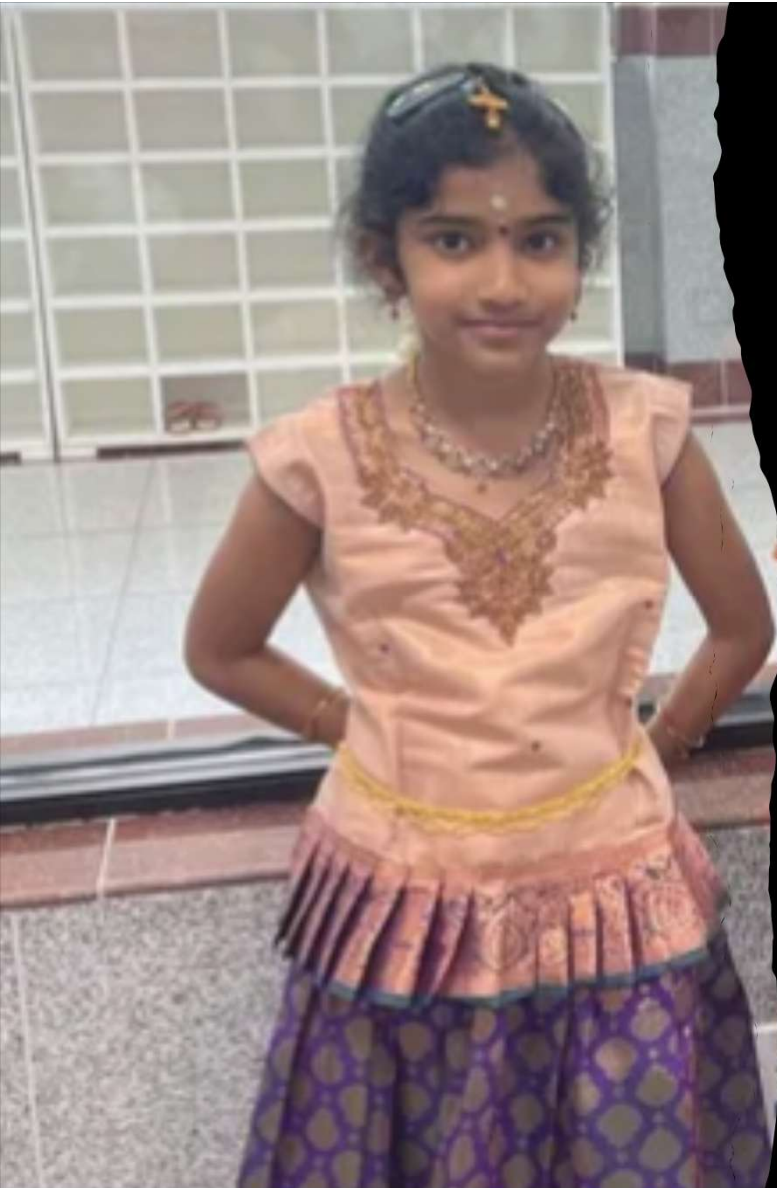
Sri Thiyagarajar's brother was unhappy that Sri Thiyagarajar spent all his lifetime on chanting Raama Naama and doing pooja to the Rama Vighraha. One day, without Sri Thiyagarajar's knowledge, his brother threw the Raama Vighraha into the Kavery river. After realising what had happened Sri Thiyagarajar was very sad, and was in tears with no food, water and sleep chanting Raama Naama and singing songs asking why Lord Raama left him.

Unable to bear his devotee's sorrow, Lord Raama came in Sri Thiyagarajar's dream and mentioned the exact place of his vighraha in Kavery river. Sri Thiyagarajar followed his instructions and successfully attained the Vighraha back, in complete joy and excitement, he sang "Thorekethava Raghuveera" a famous composition.

Miracle 3:

Sri Thiyagarajar once travelled to Chennai and participated in various concerts and events. Event organizer gifted him a few gold coins, which Sri Thiyagarajar declined saying he didn't do the concert for money. However, the event organizer, gave the coins to Sri Thiyagarajar's sishyas mentioning that they could use it for Sri Rama Navami and Sri Jayanthi events.

Sishyas took the coins and hid it in Sri Thiyagarajar's palanquin which was keenly observed by the thieves. The thieves followed them and started throwing stones at the palanquin when they were on the way to Thiruvaiyaru. Sri Thiyagarajar was surprised by the act, and overheard Sishyas mentioning that the thieves are here for gold coins. When he enquired the sishyas, they told that the event organizer gave it for Sri Rama Navami and Sri Jayanthi. After hearing that, Sri Thiyagarajar said that then it is Lord Raama's responsibility to safeguard his gold coins. They continued travelling and in the dawn settled to a mandapam. The thieves came running to Sri Thiyagarajar, and fell into his feet begging for forgiveness. When he enquired, the thieves mentioned that they followed the palanquin the whole night and they were unable to steal the money as there were 2 soldiers with bow and arrow guarding the palanquin. On hearing that, Sri Thiyagarajar mentioned that even though they were thieves they were very lucky to get Lord Raama's darshanam. This incident proves that Lord Raama was always with Sri Thiyagarajar and protecting him from all his sorrows.



- Conclusion:
- Sri Thiyagarajar was an ardent devotee of Lord Raama and has sung 24000 songs, out of which we were able to retrieve only 700 songs. Sri Thiyagarajar Aradhanai happens every year in Thiruvaiyaru, where 1000's of musicians gather together to sing Sri Thiyagarajar's pancharatna krithis and offer their salutations to them.
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- I would like to thank Sandhya mam for providing the opportunity to learn about this great musician.



[*Video Link*](#)

The original video was narrated in Tamil. For a wider audience to understand, the video has been translated into English

Nishita Bharath Kumar

Events Pictures

Pictures and videos from various events by Smt. Sandhya Anand and her Student's



[*Video Link 1*](#)

[*Video Link 2*](#)



[Video Link 1](#)
[Video Link 2](#)





[*Video Link 1*](#)

[*Video Link 2*](#)

It's playtime

Indira Subrahmanyam

I would like to share a Musical Match-Up memory game linked below, which I have created as a contribution for the upcoming newsletter, celebrating Sri Thyagaraja Swami.

Please click the play time button/Link to access the website.

Play Time

<https://puzzel.org/en/memory/play?p=-OE73VTsNm9wpKHx8B5F>

Instructions:

How to Play

1. Turn Over Two Cards: Tap on two cards to flip them over. One card will have a definition, and the other card may have the term or a picture matching it.
 2. Check for a Match: If the two cards match, then the player can continue with the game until they reach the end. However, if they do not match, the cards are then turned back, facing down, in their original positions.
 3. Remember the Cards: The player(s) should attempt to remember the positions of cards they've seen, so that they can find the matching card pairs successfully.
 4. This game concludes once the player has found all the cards and their corresponding matches.
 5. *Note: If the memory game is played by more than one individual, then all steps shall be followed, but players must take their turns accordingly. If one player does not find a match on their chance, then the turn proceeds to the next player.*
- Enjoy and Have Fun playing this Musical Match-Up Memory Game! :)

Answers for previous month's puzzles:

1. **Shankarabharanam** → A) Isaac Newton
 - Shankarabharanam is a raga that symbolizes order, structure, and harmony, which aligns with Newton's foundational work in the laws of motion and universal gravitation.
2. **Yamuna Kalyani** → B) Marie Curie
 - Yamuna Kalyani is known for its grace and delicate beauty, representing the sensitive nature of Marie Curie's work in radioactivity, a field requiring precision and dedication.
3. **Bhairavi** → C) Rosalind Franklin
 - Bhairavi is deep, serious, and emotionally intense, mirroring the dedication and intellectual rigor of Rosalind Franklin, whose work was pivotal in the discovery of the DNA structure.
4. **Todi** → D) Albert Einstein
 - Todi is a complex, intellectual raga with profound depth, reflecting Einstein's revolutionary theories of relativity, which fundamentally changed our understanding of space and time.
5. **Hamsadhvani** → E) Ada Lovelace
 - Hamsadhvani is light, joyful, and innovative, much like Ada Lovelace, who introduced the concept of algorithm and is regarded as the first computer programmer.
6. **Madhyamavati** → F) Nikola Tesla
 - Madhyamavati is a visionary raga that evokes grandeur and expansiveness, paralleling Tesla's groundbreaking work in alternating current (AC) and his innovative inventions in electrical engineering.
7. **Bhairav** → G) Galileo Galilei
 - Bhairav is austere and majestic, symbolizing the seriousness and revolutionary nature of Galileo's work in astronomy and his advocacy for the heliocentric theory of the solar system.
8. **Sindhu Bhairavi** → H) Carl Sagan
 - Sindhu Bhairavi is expansive and evokes a sense of awe, much like Carl Sagan, whose work in cosmology and his ability to communicate the vastness of the universe aligns with the cosmic quality of this raga.
9. **Vachaspati** → I) James Clerk Maxwell
 - Vachaspati is a raga that represents clarity, intellectual brilliance, and the pursuit of knowledge, qualities that align with Maxwell's contributions to the theory of electromagnetism, which unified electricity, magnetism, and light.

Text



Music devoid of Bhakti (devotion) will not
lead us to salvation

- Sri Tyagaraja Swami

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Stay tuned until our next
newsletter!

Events Extravaganza

