

Carnatic Music Theory

Second Year ¹²

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²Download: http://beautifulnote.com/download/carnatic_music_theory2.pdf

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Chapter 1

Technical Terms

Bharatham *Ghandharvam* (sangeetham) was brought to Earth (Bhoolokha) by Bharatha Muni. So the word *Bharatham* is attributed to music. In that, *Bha* stands for Bhava, *Ra* stands for Raga and *Tha* stands for Thala. These three are the most important aspects of our Music.

Ghandharvam refers to Sangeetham (Music). It's derived from Ghandharva Ghanam, the music performed in heavens by *Ghandharvas*.

Thouryathrikam Vocal Music, Instrumental Music and Dance, all the three combined together is referred to as *Thouryathrikam*.

Nadham When *Prana* and *Agni* are combined together, *Dwani* is born. This dwani is *Nadham*. In the word *Nadham*, *Na* refers to Praanam, *Dha* denotes agni. Combination of these two is referred to as Nadha in Shastras. Nadha exists in *Mandhra*, *Madhya* and *Tara* Stayis. Nadha gives birth to Swaras, Swaras form Swara Stanas and Srutis, and they give birth to Ragas.

Chapter 2

16 Suddha-Vikrutha Swarandragada Sthanas

There are Seven basic swaras, known as Sapta Swaras -

1. Shadjam
2. Rishabam
3. Ghandharam
4. Madyamam
5. Panchamam
6. Dhaivatam
7. Nishadham

Of these seven swaras, Shadjam and Panchamam are fixed. They are known as achala swaras. Other five swaras allow two basic variations in sruti

Rishabam Suddha Rishabam - Chatusruti Rishabam

Ghandaram Sadharana Ghandaram - Antara Ghandaram

Madyamam Suddha Madyamam - Prati Madyamam

Dhaivatam Suddha Dhaivatam - Chatusruti Dhaivatam

Nishadam Kaisiki Nishadam - Kakali Nishadam

This way we get 12 basic swarastanas, known as Dwadasa Swarastanas. (2 achala + 5x2 chala = 12)

Infact Rishabam, Ghandara, Dhaivatam and Nishadam allow Three variations each rather than two. But the sruti of one of these variations coincides with the sruti of some variation of the adjacent swaram.

<i>New Variation</i>	=	<i>Existing Sruti in Dwadasa Swarastana</i>
Shatsruti Rishabam	=	Sadharana Ghandaram
Suddha Ghandaram	=	Chatusruti Rishabam
Shatsruti Dhaivatam	=	Kaisiki Nishadam
Suddha Nishadam	=	Chatusruti Dhaivatam

This way we get 4 additional swarasthanas, however aligning with existing 12, hence 16 swarastahans.

Shodasa (16) Suddha-Vikruta Swarandaragada Swarastanas (in ascending order of sruti)

- Shadjam
- Suddha Rishabam
- Chatusruti Rishabam = Suddha Ghandaram
- Shatsruti Rishabam = Sadharana Ghandaram
- Antara Ghandaram
- Suddha Madyamam
- Prati Madyamam
- Panchamam
- Suddha Dhaivatam
- Chatursruti Dhaivatam = Suddha Nishadam
- Shatsruti Dhaivatam = Kaisiki Nishadam
- Kakali Nishadam

Chapter 3

Raga Thrayodasa Lakshanas

The thirteen characteristics of a Raga, mentioned in the Sanskrit works on music which established the swaroota or melodic entity of the Raga, are known as Raga Thrayodasa Lakshanas. They are -

Gruha, Hamsa, Madra, Thara, Nyasa, Apanyasa, Sanyasa, Vinyasa, Bhahutwa, Alpatwa, Sampoorana, Shadava, Audava.

Gruha Swaram The note on which the Raga is commenced. Starting note of a Sangathi or Item or Ragam. There may be One, Two or even more Graha Swaras in a Ragam.

Hamsa/Jiva Swaram The note which revealed the melodic entity or the Swaroota of the Raga; (Soul of the raga). To show the Swaroota of the Raga in an Alapana or sangathi, this note is sung repeatedly, very often. This can be considered as the Main swara of the raga. There can be 1 or more Hamsa swaras in a raga.

Nyasa Swaram Ending note of the raga; the note on which the Raga was concluded.

Madram and Tharam the lowest and highest notes respectively, beyond which the Raga sancharas should not extend. Madram defines the notes that are singable in the Madra Stayi for the particular Raga. The swaras lower than that should not be sung/performed. Similarly, Thara Swaram defines the notes in Thara Stayi which are allowed in the raga.

Gruha,
Hamsa,
Nyasa
Swaras
are
manda-
tory for
the raga.
If not
specified
Shadjam
assumes
the role
of these
three.

Apanyasam A Raga Alapana is done in different sections or parts or stages. Apanyasam is the starting note of each section.

Sanyasam is the ending note of each section in the raga alapana.

Vinyasam In each section of the Raga alapana, Vinyasa is the note used to show the Raga 'Kalai'/Chhaya or the essence of raga.

Bahuthwam the note that is used frequently in the raga. It has two subtypes -

Alanganam and Abhyasam Sancharas revolve around these note.

Alpathvam the note that is used sparingly in the raga. Two subtypes

Langanam The swara is pronounced, but the note sung is actually the neighbouring tone. So though the Langana Swara appears to be performed, the actual sruti/frequency of that swara is rarely performed. It's like creating an illusion of that swara being sung, while the actual swara sounded is different.

Anabhyasam is a note that's completely omitted or rarely performed.

Sampoornam ¹ A raga consisting of all 7 Swaras in both Arohanam and Avarohanam is called a Sampoorna Raga. All the sapta swaras are used when performing this raga.

Shadavam is a Raga constituted of 6 notes.

Audavam is a Raga constituted of 5 notes. ²

¹Note Last three lakshanas - Audava, Shadava & Sampoorna, are disputed by some musicologists. They are not considered to be parts of Raga Lakshanas by them.

²Antara Maarga - the introduction of a note or chhaaya not belonging to the raga.
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Chapter 4

Raga Lakshanas

4.1 Mayamalavagowla

- 15th Melam. 3rd Chakram 3rd Ragam
- Real name: Malava-gowla. “Maya” added according to 72 Melakarta scheme.
- Very old and Sampurna Ragam. Many Janya Ragas
- Arohanam: *srgmpdnś* Avarohanam: *śndpmgrs*
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Suddha Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Panchamam, Suddha Dhaivatham, Kakali Nishadham
- All Basic lessons taught in this raga.
- Jiva Swaram: G, N. Hamsa Swaram: G, P
- Items starting in : *s, g, m, d, n and ś*
- Suitable to be sung at the beginning of the concert
- Hindustani Equivalent: Bhairav
- Compositions:
 - Sarali, Janta, Alankaras, Dhattu
 - Krutis

- * Thulasidala Mulache - Rupakam - Tyagaraja
- * Mayaadeetha Swarupini - Rupakam - Ponniah Pillai

4.2 Malahari

- 15th Mela Janyam (Mayamalava Gowla)
- Aro: *srmpdś*, Avaro: *śdpmgrs*. Swarasthanas - ...
- Oudava Ragam. Varja Ragam (Ni Varjam, Ga varjam in Arohanam)
- Upanga Ragam.
- Compositions Start: *r, m, p, d*
- Purandara Dasa composed Pillari Geethas in this raga.
- Gruham: *s, m, d*
- Less scope for elaborate alapana.
- Compositions:
 - Geethas
 - * Sri Gananadha, Kunda Gowra, Keraya Neeranu, Paduma Nabha - Purandara Dasa
 - Kritis
 - * Pancha Mathanga - Rupakam - Dikshitar

4.3 Mohanam

- 28th Mela Janyam (Hari Kamboji)
- Arohanam: *srgpdś* Avarohanam: *śdpgrs*
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Panchamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatam
- Upanga Ragam | Varja Ragam (G, N varjam) | Audava Ragam

- Jiva Swaras: r, g, d
- Most Suitable for Slokas, Padyas. Has many compositions. Compositions Start: s, g, d
- Hindustani Equivalent: Bhupali
- Compositions:
 - Geetha: Vara Veena
 - Varnam: Ninnu kori - Adi - Ramnad Srinivasa Iyengar
 - Kruti:
 - * Rama Ninnu Nammina - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Nannu Palimpa - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Evarura - Chapu - Tyagaraja

4.4 Kalyani

- 65th Melam. 11th Chakra, 5th Raga.
- Arohanam & Avarohanam $srgmpdn\acute{s} - \acute{s}ndpmgrs$
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Prati Madyamam, Panchamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatham, Kakali Nishadham
- *Mecha* kalayani according to 72 Melakarta scheme.
- Major Ragam. Many Janyams. Most famous Prati Madyama Ragam.
- *Sarva Swara Gamaka Vareeka Rakti Ragam.*
 - Heavy Scope for Raga Alapana.
- All swaras have Raga Chaya
- Many Kritis Start on g, \acute{s}
- Compositions

- Geetham: Kamala Jaatala
- Varnam
 - * Vanajakshiro - Adi - Ramnad Srinivasa Iyer
 - * Vanajakshi Ninne - Ata - Pallavi Gopalayyar
- Kriti
 - * Amma Ravamma - Kanda Chapu - Tyagaraja
 - * Nidhi Chala Sukhama - Misra Chapu - Tyagaraja
 - * Kamalambam Bajare - Adi - Dikshitar

4.5 Shankarabharanam

- 29th Melam. 5th Chakram, 5th Ragam.
- “Dheera” Shankarabharanam, according to 72 Mela scheme.
- Arohanam & Avarohanam *srgmpdnś – śndpmgrs*
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Panchamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatham, Kakali Nishadham
- Major Raga | Many Janya Ragas | All Swaras Raga chaya Swaras
- *Sarva Swara Gamaka Vareeka Rakti Ragam*
 - Heavy Scope for Raga Alapana
- Hindustani Equivalent: Bilaval
- Compositions Start: *s, g, m, p*
- Compositions:
 - Geetham: Govindhachuda - Matya Thalam
 - Varnam:
 - * Sami Ninne - Adi - Veena Kuppaiyyar
 - * Chalamela - Ata - Swati Tirunal Maharaja

– Kriti:

- * Swara Raga Sudha - Adi - Tyagaraja
- * Akshaya Linga Vibho - Misra Chapu - Tyagaraja
- * Saroja Dhala Netri - Adi - Syama Sastri

4.6 Natakuranji

- 28th Mela Janyam (Harikamboji)
- Arohanam: *srgmndnpdnś* Avarohanam: *śndmgs* or *śndmgmpgrs*
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Panchamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatam, Kaisika Nishadham
- Ubaya Vakra Ragam
- Panchamam varjam in avarohanam.
- Gamaka Vareeka Rakthi Ragam
- Tri-Staayi ragam.
- Karuna Rasam. Suitable to be sung in the evenings.
- Prominantly used in Dance-Dramas.
- Raga Chaaya swaras: *g, m, d*
- Items start on: *s, m, n*
- *Nishadham* - Nyasa Swaram. Kampita Swaram
- Compositions:
 - Varnam
 - * Chalamela Jese - Adi - Srirangam Rangaswamy Nattuvanar
 - Kriti
 - * Manasu vishaya nata - Adi - Tyagaraja

- * Kuvalaya dhala nayana - Adi - Tyagaraja
- * Bhudamasrayami (Navagraha Kriti) - Jampa - Muthuswamy Dikshitar
- * Needhu Murthini - Adi - Pallavi Gopalayyar
- * Mamavasadha - Rupakam - Swati Tirunal

4.7 Dharbar

- 22nd Mela (Kharaharapriya) Janyam
- Arohanam: *srmpdnś* Avarohanam: *śNdpmrGGrs*
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Sadharana Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Panchamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatam, Kaisika Nishadham
- Krama Shadava - Vakra Sampurna Ragam
- *g* varjam in arohanam
- Upanga Ragam
- Compositions start on: *r, p & d*
- Compositions
 - Varnam: Chalamela - Adi - Thiruvotriyur Tyagayyar
 - Kriti
 - * Yochana kamala - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Naradha guru swamy - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Ramabhirama - Chapu - Tyagraja

4.8 Khamboji

- 28th Mela (Harikamboji) Janyam
- Arohanam: *srgmpdś* Avarohanam: *śndpmgrs*

- Swarasthanas:
- Shadava - Sampoorna Ragam
- Varja Ragam: *nishadham* varjam in arohanam
- Bashanga Ragam: Kakali Nishadham - anya swaram occurs
- Raga Chaya swaras: *m, d, kaisika nishadham*
- Nyasa Swaras: *g, m, p, m, d*
- Allows elaborate alapana. Tristayi ragam
- Bakthi Rasam. Suitable for Slokams, Padyams, Nrutya-natakams
- Compositions
 - Varnam
 - * Sarasija - Ata Thalam - Swati Tirunal
 - * Kamalakshi - Jampa Thalam
 - * Tharuni - Adi -
 - Kriti
 - * O Ranga Sayi - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Sri Subramanyaya - Rupakam - Muthuswamy Dikshitar

4.9 Hamsadwani

- 29th Mela (Dhira Sankarabarana) Janyam
- Arohanam: *srgpnś* Avarohanam: *śnpgrs*
- Swarasthanas -
- Audava Ragam
- Varja Ragam - *m & d* varja swaras
- Upanga Ragam

- Raga Chaya swaras: g, n
- Sarva swara gamaka varika rakthi ragam
- Veera Rasam
- Janta and Dhatu proyogas bring beauty to this raga
- Compositions start on s, g, p
- Sarva swara Nyasa Ragam - All swarams are nyasa swarams
- Tri-Stayi ragam
- Compositions
 - Varjam: Jalajaksha - Adi - Manambuchavadi Vengatasubiar
 - Kriti
 - * Vatapi Ganapathimbaje - Adi - Muthuswami Dikshitar
 - * Ragunayaka - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Vinayaka Ninnu - Adi - Veena Kuppiar

4.10 Begada

- 29th Mela (Dhira Sankarabarana) Janyam
- Arohanam: $sgrgmpdp\acute{s}$ or $sgrgmpdNdp\acute{s}$ Avarohanam: $\acute{s}NdpMgrs$
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Panchamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatham, Kakali Nishadham
- Shadava-Sampoorna Ragam
- Vakra Ragam - Arohanam vakram
- Upanga Ragam
- Tristayi Ragam
- *Gamakavarika rakthi ragam*

- Can be used to perform in Musical Dramas.
- Raga Chaya Swaras: m, d, n
- Nyasa Swaras: p, m
- Suitable to be sung at any time, especially in the afternoons
- One can begin with the varnam in Begada.
- PATNAM SUBRAMANYA IYER achieved great mastery over this raga, hence the name *Begada Subramanya Iyer*
- Compositions
 - Varnam: Intha Chalamu - Adi - Veena Kuppaiar
 - Kritis
 - * Nadhopasana - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Nee padha pankaja - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Tyagarajaya - Rupakam - Muthuswamy Dikshitar
 - * Manasunanera - Rupakam - Patnam Subramanya Iyer
 - Javali
 - * Idhi Neeku - Chapu - Dharmapuri Subbarayar

4.11 Vasantha

- Janyam of 17th Melam, *Suryagantham*
- Arohanam: $sgmdn\acute{s}$ Avarohanam: $\acute{s}ndm\grave{r}s$
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Suddha Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatham, Kakali Nishadam
- Audava - Shadava Ragam
- Upanga Ragam
- Auspecies Ragam. Ancient Ragam. Gamaka Varika Rakthi Ragam. Tri-Staayi Ragam

- Suitable for Padyams, Viruthams, Dance Dramas.
- Varja Ragam. r, p absent in Arohanam, p varjam in Avarohanam.
- Raga Chaya Swaras: g, m, d, n
- Nyasa Swaras: m, d
- Compositions start on: s, g, m
- Compositions
 - Varnam
 - * Ninne kori - Adi - Thachur Singarachari
 - Kriti
 - * Seethamma Mayamma - Rupakam - Tyagaraja

4.12 Sri Ragam

- 22nd mela (Kharaharapriya) Janyam
- Arhanam: $srmpn\acute{s}$ Avarohanam: $\acute{s}n\acute{p}mrg\acute{r}s$ or $\acute{s}n\acute{p}d\acute{n}p\acute{m}r\acute{g}\acute{r}s$
- Swarashanas: Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Sadharana Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Panchamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatam, Kaisika Nishadham
- Upanga Raga. Audava - Vakra Sampurna Raga
- Gana Raga
- Ancient and Auspicious Raga
- Many prominent composers composed many kritis in this Raga
- Suitable to begin a concert with this Raga
- Compositions in Sri Ragam
 - Geetham: Meenakshi Jaya Kamakshi

- Varnam: Sami Ninne Kori - Adi - Karur Devudu Iyer
- Kritis
 - * Endaro Mahanubhavulu - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Sri Varalakshmi - Rupakam - Muthuswamy Dikshitar

4.13 Saveri

- 15th Mela (Mayamalavagowla) Janyam
- Arhanam: *srmpdś* Avarohanam: *śndpmgrs*
- Swarasthanas: Shadjam, Suddha Rishabam, Antara Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Panchamam, Suddha Dhaivatam, Kakali Nishadam
- Audava - Sampoorana Ragam
- *Gamakavarika Rakthi Ragam*
- Ancient Ragam
- Tristayi Ragam
- Good scope for elaborate alapana.
- Raga Chaya Swaras: *r, m, d*
- Nyasa Swaras: *m, p, d*
- Karuna Rasam. Suitable for Slokas, Padyas, Viruthams and for Musical Dramas.
- Many compositions commence on *s, p, d* and some on *g* too
- Compositions
 - Geetham: Janaka Sudha - Rupakam
 - Varnam: Sarasuda - Adi - Kothavasal Venkataramayyar
 - Kritis
 - * Rama Bhana - Adi - Tyagaraja

- * Thulasi Jagadh Janani - Rupakam - Tyagaraja
- * Sri Rajagopala - Adi - Muthuswamy Dikshitar
- * Enta Nerchina - Adi - Patnam Subramanya Iyer

4.14 Sri Ranjani

- 22nd Mela (Kharaharapriya) Janyam
- Arohanam: *srgmdnś* Avarohanam: *śndmgrs*
- Swarasthanas - Shadjam, Chatusruti Rishabam, Sadharana Ghandaram, Suddha Madyamam, Chatusruti Dhaivatam, Kaisika Nishadam
- Shadava Ragam
- Panchama Varja ragam
- Upanga Ragam
- Raga Chaya Swaras: *r, g, d, n*
- Nyasa Swaram: *m*
- Mesmerizing raga
- Hindustani Equivalent: Bagesri
- Compositions start on *s, r, m, n*
- Compositions
 - Kriti
 - * Brocheva revare - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Sokasuka - Rupakam - Tyagaraja
 - * Sri Dhundhurge - Kanda Ekam - Muthuswamy Dishitar

4.15 Hindolam

- 20th mela (Natabhairavi) Janyam
- Arohanam: *sgmdns* or *smgmdns* Avarohanam: *sndmgs*
- Audava Ragam
- Panchama Varja Ragam
- Sarvaswara Murchanakara Janya ragam
- Upanga Ragam
- Tri-stayi ragam
- Jiva Swarams: d, n
- Hamsa swaram: m
- Doesn't provide scope for elaborate alapana.
- Compositions start on s, m, n
- Hindustani Equivalent: Malkouns
- Compositions
 - Kriti
 - * Samajavaragamana - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Manasuloni - Adi - Tyagaraja
 - * Nirajakshi - Rupakam - Muthuswamy Dikshitar
 - * Mamavathu Sri - Adi - Mysore Vasudevacharya

Chapter 5

Varna Lakshnam

Varnams - The Pillars of Abhyasa Ganams

- Varnams are scholarly compositions belonging to Abhyasa-Ganam Category. They are like the pillars amongst Abhyasa Ganams.
- In learning music, Varnams are the foundations of Ragams and Gamakams. Students should learn Varnams very carefully and thoroughly because they learn about gamakas from here only. If a student fails to properly understand and master gamakas, which are the essence of Ragas, it'll set a very wrong foundation that'll affect the student's entire progress in music.
- The composition of varnam is of very high standards. It has the Raga bhavam, Raga ranjaka prayogas, rare sancharas, Dhattu and Janta phrases in appropriate places. Analysing and understanding of these aspects are the first steps in Manodharma Sangeetham (Raga Alapana, Kalpana Swarams etc.)
- All the students learning vocal and instrumental music should practise varnams in 3 speeds. This will help them establish their fingering (instrumental) and bring control to their voice (vocal). In the varnam's composition, all sort of exercises are present. So the students will gain the ability to sing/perform all kind of prayogas.
- Though Varnams belong to Abhyasa Ganam category, due to their high standards, they are suitable to be performed in the concert. We have

the tradition of singing/playing a varnam at the very beginning of a concert.

Structure of Varnams

- The Sahityam part of a varnam is very minimal, and mostly of Bhakti or Srungara Rasam.
- Varnams are compositions under Chitra-Thara-Margam. So they have 4 aksharams per kriya.
- A varnam has two parts. First part is known as *Purvangam* and it is followed by *Utharangam*
- Purvangam consists of
 - Pallavi
 - Anu Pallavi
 - Mukthayi Swarams
- Utharangam consists of
 - Charanam
 - Ethugada Swrams (also known as Charana Swarams or Chitta Swarams)
 - * Varnams usually have 4 or 5 ethugada swarams.
 - 1st and 2nd ethugada swarams - 1 avartham each. First ethugada swaram is mostly made up of Dirgams.
 - 3rd Ethugada swaram - 2 or 3 avarthams. Mostly short notes, no dirga swarams.
 - 4th Ethugada Swaram - 4 avarthams. Mixture of Dirgam and non-dirgam notes. This one has janta, dhattu proyo-gas and rare sancharas of the raga.
 - Understanding and practising ethugada swarams is the first step in learning kalpana swarams.

Types of Varnams

There are 3 types of varnams -

1. Thana Varnam

- (a) Sahityam only for Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam
- (b) Learned after learning Geethams, Swarapallavi and Swarajathi
- (c) Melody of tAna varna takes phrases that are used in tAnam rendition. The emphasis is on the melodic and rhythmic combinations rather than sahitya.
- (d) Thana varnams are usually set to Adi, Ata, Triputa Thalas
- (e) Composers who wrote thana varnams -
 - i. Pachimiriyam Adiyappaiyar
 - ii. Veena Kuppaiyar
 - iii. Pallavi Gopalayyar
 - iv. Patnam Subramanya Iyer

2. Padha Varnam

- (a) Mostly used in Dances
- (b) Set to slower tempos, to facilitate performing abhinayams in dance
- (c) Sahityam for All the parts of the varnam (Pallavi, Anupallavi, Mukthayi Swaram, Charanam, Charana Swarams)
- (d) Padha Varnam is in a form that emulates that of Padham, with emphasis on Sahityam
- (e) Composers who wrote Padha Varnams -
 - i. Govinda Swamy Iyer
 - ii. Pallavi Seshayyar
 - iii. Mysore Sadhasiva Rao

3. Ragamalika Varnam

- (a) Pallavi - One Ragam, Anu Pallavi - One Ragam, Mukthiyai Swaram
- Two Ragams

- (b) Charanam - One Ragam, Chitta Swarams - Each in Different Ragas.
- (c) Eg: Valachi Valachi - Navaragamalika Varnam in Adi Thalam, by Patnam Subramnya Iyer

Way of Singing Varnams

- First the Purvangam is performed, followed by Utharangam
- In the Purvangam, each avartham is performed twice in first speed (4 aksharams per kriya). Once the Mukthayi swaram is performed this way, the entire Purvangam is repeated at second degree of speed, in the same manner. Once second speed is over, the entire purvangam is performed at the third speed, and concluded by the performing a portion of pallavi at the first speed.
- Once the Purvangam is over, Utharangam can be performed either at a fixed speed (Madyama Kalam) or in 2 or 3 speeds.
- In Utharangam, Charanam is performed first followed by First chitta swaram.
- After each chitta swaram, Charanam is repeated again before progressing to the next chitta swaram
- Varnam is concluded by performing Charanam or a portion of it, after reciting all the ethugada swarams

Chapter 6

Biographies

6.1 Veena Kuppaiyar

- Origins
 - 1798-1860, Thiruvotriyur
 - Son of great veena maestro Sambamurthy Sastry
 - Expert in Veena. Mastery over Sanskrit and music since childhood.
- Direct & best known deciple of Saint Tyagaraja.
- Guru Bhakti: Named his last son after his guru => Thiruvotriyur Tyagayyar, became a well-known musician too.
- Fame:
 - Well respected by fellow Vidwans
 - Aquired the title of “Gaana Chakravarthy”
- Anecdotes
 - Worshipped Radha - Rukmani samedha Venugopala Swamy. Saint Tyagaraja once visited Kuppaiyar’s house upon his repeated request. The saint was delighted to see the God’s vighraha, and composed “Venu Gana Lolunikana” in Kedara Gowla Raga.

- Music
 - Written many Varnas, Kritis and Keerthanas in Telugu, including group compositions -
 - * Venkatesa Pancharatnam
 - * Kaalahasteesa Pancharatnam
 - * Chamundeeswari Pancharatnam
 - His compositions are full of Ragabhava and Arta-Bhava. His Sahityams often have beautiful word play.
 - Favourite Ragam: Narayana Gowla => Varnam: Maguva Ledha Ninne Kori. Very intellectual composition ==> Narayana Gowla Kuppaiyar.
 - Mudra: “Gopala Dasa”

6.2 Thiruvotriyur Thyagayyar

- 19th Century
- Son of eminent singer, veena player & Vaggeyakara - Veena Kuppayyar.
- Since childhood he aquired mastery over Telugu language and Music. Blessed by Saint Tyagaraja.
- Also a great musician like his father. Has written Varnas, Keerthanas etc.
- His expertise in handling Ragas is evident from his compositions.
- He also wrote a book called “Pallavi Svarakalpavalli ”. In his book he has notated many varnams, keerthanams etc.
- Mudra “Gopala Dasa”

6.3 Patnam Subramanya Iyer

- Origins

- 1845 to July 31, 1902 (Lived 58 years)
- Born in Tanjavur. S/o Bharatam Vaidyanadha Iyer, Bharata Natya exponent, Samastana Vidwan of the Court of Sarfoji Maharaja.
- Got married at the of 32. Moved to Thiruvayyaru.
- Music Education
 - First learnt from his uncle, Merattur Ganapati Sastry,
 - Later from Manambuchavadi Venkata Subbaiyar (Relative and Direct deciple of Saint Tyagaraja)
 - At the beginning Subramanya Iyer's voice was hard and unresponsive. He practised singing in neck-deep water in very early morning. Later his voice became soft and melodious.
- Music
 - Took up music profession at the age of 30
 - He was a Pallavi Vidwan and Vaggeyakara (composer).
 - He has composed many Thana Varnas, Padha varnas, Javalis, Kritis, and Tillanas. Yet he would sing mainly Tyagaraja Swami's kritis in concerts.
 - * Subramanya Iyer's compositions have both Raga Bhava and richness in meaning.
 - * Many of his works are in Telugu, some in Sanskrit.
 - * Chitta Swarams are particularly very beautiful in his compositions.
 - As a performer, his specialty is Manodharmam. He was unparalleled in singing even rare ragas to a great extent.
 - He was particularly known for his extempore of Begada Raga. Hence he was even known as Begada Subramanyam Iyer.
 - He was very famous and well respected during his time. He was supported by many Jamindars. He was commissioned to perform regularly in Ramanadhapuram, Vijayanagaram, Mysore and Tiruvanandapuram Samasthanams.

- Mudra: “Venkatesa”
- Contribution: Raga Kadana Kuduhalam. (S R M D, N G P S, S N D P M G R S).
- Contribution: Pallavi in Simhanandana Thala, one of the longest of 108 Thalas.

- Disciples

- Tiger Varadhachariar
- Mysore Vasudevacharya
- Thiruvaadi Krishnaswamy Iyer
- Ramanadapuram (poochi) Seenuvasa Iyengar
- Thirukkodikkaval Krishnayyar
- Muthialpet Seshayyar alias Kulla Seshayyar
- Enadi Sisters: Lakshmi, Narayani
- M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer
- Selam Meenakshi and her daughters Pappa, Radha
 - * Subramanya Iyer moved to Chennai (Patnam) to teach Pappa and Radha and stayed there for a long time. Hence the name Patnam Subramanya Iyer.