

The Concept of 'Time-Theory' in Indian Ragas

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Abstract

Indian Classical Music is based on the Ragas. Actually, the Time of singing and playing of any Raga depends on the 'Vadi' and 'Samavadi Swaras'. Moreover, it also depends on the consonance and application of 'Shuddha' and 'Vikrita Swaras'.

Keywords: *Indian Classical Music, Ragas, Saptak, Vadi, Samavadi, Poorvanga, Uttaranga.*

Indian Classical Music has the richest contents based on the huge number of Ragas (Ragas and Raginis) from the very beginning till date. Over the ages we find the Ragas throughout all the streams of it, namely, the Musical Streams of Dhruba-Geeti, Dhrupad, Dhamar, Tappa, Thumri, Tarana, Dadra, Chaiti, Kajri, Bhajan etc. All of us are mostly familiar with many of the Ragas; many of us have some keen knowledge of Ragas and many of us have a little only. The people who are the true lovers of Indian Classical Music used to go to listen to the variety of Classical Music in different times of day or night. Mainly, they used to listen to a variety of Ragas. It is to be noted that some of the Ragas are played in the morning session and some are to be played in the evening only. Hence, we can easily understand that Indian Classical Music has the particular Time-arrangements in order to perform and for one's Riyaz (practice) too.

There are the Ragas which have different times to play and to sing since our ancient era. Actually, we have the eights Praharas in a whole day (day and night). According to this, the Ragas were set with their Time-Schedules: four Praharas in the first-half of the Day and rest of the four in the second-half. So, the 24 hours are divided by eight Praharas (4x3hrs.=12hrs in the day and 4x3hrs.=12hrs in the night) in a calculation of having 3 hrs in one Prahara. The time starts from 6am to 9am= 1st quarter(Prathama Prahara), 9am to 12 noon=2nd quarter (Dwitiya Prahara), 12 noon to 3pm= 3rd quarter (Tritiya Prahara) & 3pm to 6pm =4th quarter (Chaturtha Prahara). In this way, all the Thatas are organised and the Ragas are naturally arranged with the scheduled time-information of their Thatas (Origins).

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Now, a performer should know how the Ragas are denoted with their TIME of any part of the Day or Night. In a way, it is set by the application of the fourth-note, Madhyama (Ma). If Ma will be sharpened (Teevra-Madhyam) and most importantly, it is used frequently and prominently, then the Ragas are obviously proceeding towards the evening and thereafter towards 12 O'clock at night. After that time, the Shuddha Ma is appeared boldly and distinctively. But, this theory is not appreciated or accepted by our Musical Exponents.

The other concept of time is that usually the placement of Vadi Swaras on Madhya Saptak takes a vital role to detect the Anga of a Raga. Moreover, the Anga (Poorvanga & Uttaranga) denotes the time from the first-quarter to the fourth-quarter of the day. The Anga is enhanced towards the upper-note of a Saptak, similarly from the first-quarter to the fourth-quarter of a night, the Anga denotes the same way.

The following list of the 10 Thatas will help us to get knowledge of their notes (Swaras):

1. **Bilaval:** SA RE GA MA PA DHA NI (all are the pure-notes i.e. Shuddha-Swaras).
2. **Kalyan:** SA RE GA Ma' PA DHA NI (Ma' is Teevra).
3. **Khamaj:** SA RE GA MA PA DHA ni (ni is komal).
4. **Bhairav:** SA re GA MA PA dha NI (re & dha are komal).
5. **Poorvi:** SA re GA Ma' PA dha NI (re & dha are komal; Ma' is teevra).
6. **Marva:** SA RE GA Ma' PA DHA NI (re is komal & Ma' is teevra).
7. **Kafi:** SA RE ga MA PA DHA ni (ga & ni are komal).
8. **Asavari:** SA RE ga MA PA dha ni (ga, dha & ni are komal).
9. **Bhairavi:** SA re ga MA PA dha ni (re, ga , dha & ni are komal).
10. **Todi:** SA re ga Ma' PA dha NI (re, ga & dha are komal; Ma' is teevra).

Now, let us discuss the utility of the Time-Theory of Raga. Actually we, the Human-beings, are also a part of nature. But, we can rarely feel our mental and physical state too-nearer to the Nature throughout the day or throughout the seasons. Nature makes many changes within herself; we have so many changes in our daily attitudes and expressions. Some of these changes

we can notice when the changes depend on the remarkable climatic and seasonal changes. Many of the changes are not noticed minutely throughout the day by us. Hence, the Musicians and the Musical Exponents felt and realised the valuable theory of Nature. They composed the Ragas according to the timeline of Nature and imposed those emotions or various types of Natural changes into those Ragas. Usually, the Morning-Ragas have the Priority of Komal Rishav and Shuddha Madhyam. On the other hand, Evening-Ragas have the Priority of Shuddha Rishav and Teevra Madhyam (Both have the exceptions). The Afternoon-Ragas have Shuddha Madhyam which is followed by the Teevra Madhyam in the evening Ragas and Komal Dhaivat also. But Night Ragas have Shuddha Madhyam and Shuddha Nishad. After the end, the Night-Ragas have Komal Nishad and Shuddha Madhyam which are again followed by the Teevra Madhyam.

The following list will show the example of few Ragas of Day and Night which have the same Origin (Thata):

Thata	Ragas of Day	Ragas of Night
1. Bilaval	Bilaval, Alhaiya-Bilaval	Bihag
2. Kalyan	Gour-Sarang	Yaman, Bhupali
3. Khamaj	-	Khamaj, Rageshree
4. Bhairav	Bhairav, Vibhas	-
5. Poorvi	-	Poorvi, Puriya Dhanashree
6. Marva	Lalit	Marva, Sohni
7. Kafi	Shudh-Sarang	Kafi, Mian-Ki-Malhar
8. Asavari	Asavari, Jounpuri	Sindhu-Bhairavi
9. Bhairavi	Bhairavi, Hanumat-Todi	Malkauns
10. Todi	Todi, Multani	-

The most important item is that the Ragas of first quarter of both of the Day and the Night, such as Lalit and Poorvi, have the both Ma (Shuddha-Madhyam & Teevra-Madhyam). These Ragas are called Sandhiprakash Raga. Lalit is the Morning-Sandhiprakash Raga and Poorvi is the Evening-Sandhiprakash Raga. The both Ragas are 'Poorvanga-Raga'. In Raga Lalit, Shuddha-Ma is prominent and applied frequently. On the other hand, in Raga Poorvi, Teevra-

Ma is applied prominently and frequently.

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So, we can conclude that:

1. Each Raga has a specific time for singing and playing on instruments. Some of these have a Particular season. Example:
 - a) Raga Deepak is for Summer season,
 - b) Raga Megh (Megha-Malhar), Mian-ki-Malhar, Surdasi-Malhar etc. are for Monsoon season.
 - c) Raga Hindol, Basant etc. are for Spring season.
 - d) All the Sarangs are for noon and afternoon times.
 - e) All the Malhar-s are for Monsoon-Nights and few are for throughout the whole day.
 - f) Raga Bhairavi is for all time and for all seasons; also for devotion and meditation.
2. The 24 Hours of the whole day are divided into two parts. 12 pm to 12am is known as Poorvang and 12am to 12pm is known as Uttarang.
3. The Saptak or the Octave is also divided into two portions. Poorvang (Ma to Sa) & Uttarang (PA to upper SA).
4. The Ragas with common characteristics were assembled together to form a Thata.
5. The Raga, which is based on the Thata, after-which the Thata is named and known to us as Ashraya-Raga.
6. Vadi and Samavadi Swaras of any Raga are to be taken very important part to be a Raga, called Poorvangavadi and Uttarangavadi.
7. The application and the consonance of the Shuddha, Komal and Teevra Swaras are very much important to denote the Time of Performance (singing or playing on instrument).

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