



SUNADA

Music, Therapy and More...

Volume IX, September, 2017



From the Editor's Desk...

In this issue continuing the series of Alpha Ragas. Now we will talk of Mohana Ragam to show its uniqueness as an alpha Raga despite having all major notes. Our endeavour is to spread awareness about how Carnatic Music has the special ability, quality and pliability depending on the Mood as well as the situation. It appeals to one and all in its

light and classical form. It is therefore very suitable for use in Music Therapy.

Editor & Founder

KSVasanthaLakshmi

‘Music is a therapy. It is a communication far more powerful than words, far more immediate, more efficient’

- Yehudi Menuhin



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MUSIC FOR ME....

Deepalakshmi.S

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Music gives me a sense of peace and calmness and relaxes my mind when it's agitated. I use it a retreat from the rigors of everyday life without travelling anywhere. – I have a natural fondness for this probably because this is the music I have been exposed to (and learnt) since childhood. I learnt the Classical Vocal music but I don't practice it regularly now. But I also enjoy Classical string music and lullabies. Film Music – Am particularly fond of melody numbers and many of them turn

out to be classical based. To me, it's important I like the lyrics of the song and not just the tune. It could be a couple of hours on some days or "None" on hectic days. The same genre of music can tire me sometimes, in which case I switch between different types of songs. I experience varied feelings depending on each song and my mood – Largely melody numbers soothe me and fast numbers energise me.

Mohana – A Sweet and Playful Raga

By Swetha Sundar,
Analytics Manager, Bangalore



Although only a learner and a beginner in music, I do not know in detail the background or context of how and why each Raga was composed. However, there are some which are so close to my heart that it embodies the divinity I seek out in music. The love and explainable closeness I have for Mohana Raga remained unchanged

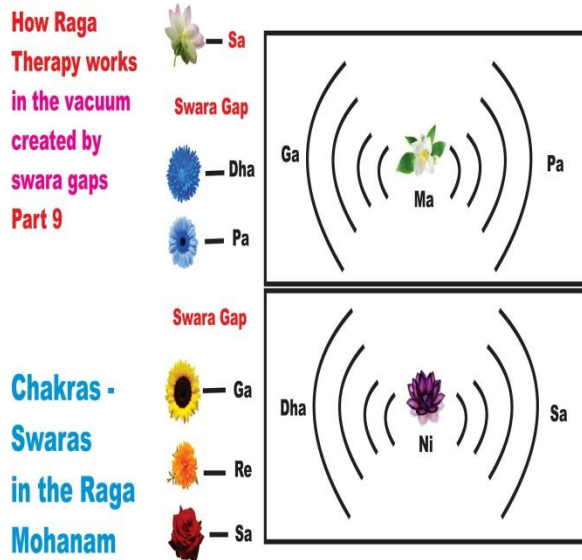
through these years. Being a Krishna lover (less of a devotee) I see and experience him in its truest form - love, laughter and all embracing. The raga to me is a flurry of activity where one runs in happiness and excitement while remaining fixated on the fundamentals of the swaras, there is naughtiness in the way the Sangatis are sung, improvisations are made which again represents Krishna to me. There is Bhakti filled with free-flowing love and equality with the almighty than fear or surrender.

MOHANA-As an Alpha Raga

By

KS Vasantha Lakshmi,

MA, MT, TM Trained



In Carnatic Music there are 72 Melakarta Ragas with all the seven notes in the ascent and descent and each one of them with a capacity to produce about 34348 combinations. There are innumerable musical sounds as individual frequencies or “Swaras” within two Octaves (i.e, Shadja or Saptak). A Raga or a Mode is a combination of these notes. There are 22 notes universally and these selected notes are used for the purpose of creating a Raga. Mohana Raga is known as an Audava Ragam

(Penta Note i.e., five notes) which means it has only an equal number of five notes in ascending and descending order.

The swaras with their exact frequencies for Mohana/Bhopali are as given below:

Sa - 100

Ri - 111.1

Ga - 125

Pa – 150 (Always stays constant in whatever pitch)

Dha – 166.66

Despite the fact that all these are major notes, this Raga seems to have the immense power and pliability to suit any mood. All the songs or tunes played to symbolize Krishna are mostly set to Mohana Raga. It may well be the reason for the Murali or the Magic Flute is also frequently referred to as Mohan Murali and Krishna himself is called Mohana

Vamshi because the meaning of Sanskrit word Mohana is enamour, enchanting or charming in English. There are umpteen examples of its lighter compositions right from vocal excercises like "Varaveena", the Geetam, "Ninnukori" the first Varnam that students learn to the very tough and expansive Keertana like "Rara Rajeeva Lochana" and lots of smaller Kritis by Thyagaraja.

When sung in the traditional and serious rendition style, it is vocally a very demanding raga, as the notes have big gaps in terms of frequency needing the singer/instrumentalist to be totally accurate and not get pitchy anywhere. It is at once serious, difficult and easy and pleasing to the ear.

Other than these in the film song genre, we have Chandana Charchita, the Sanskrit Ashtapadi from the Telugu film "Tenalai Rama", "Jyoti Kalsh Chalke" from the Hindi film "Bhabhi ki Chudiyen" by Latamangeshkar which are great examples of the lighter rendition of this Raga which adhere to the purity of the Raga to the tee. It would be criminal not to mention the famous Kuchipudi Bhamakalapam song by

Satyabhama "Meerajala galadaa" albeit with slight deviations in the Raga.

I have composed a Raga Lakshana Geetika "Mohana Murali Swaramula sarali" in Telugu to feature all the special qualities of this Raga which make it easy for a student to instantly recall the notational phrases of the Raga as also the major compositions by skillfully weaving some of the swaras from the Mohana Varnam. (It can be heard on the Youtube).

When it is used for music therapy, the therapist can produce varied effects in the listener. When used on a person needing therapy, but has some awareness of classical music, the mind is instantly drawn into details and intricacies like style of rendition, assessment of accuracy and the composition chosen by the musician. This is mostly useful in Self Therapy and advocated for the slightly elite client who has some awareness.

For the not so musically educated clients, film songs like the ones mentioned above or simply some instrumental music preferably Flute, is often found to be very effective in

relieving stress, insomnia and simply providing relaxation.

It is just not possible to enumerate the effects of this Raga in a nut shell, but I strongly advocate people to listen to this Raga in its myriad varieties of compositions, both in Indian and Western style and enjoy the benefits.

Team Sunada would appreciate any feedback on this subject.

SUNADA

WHAT YOU THINK

Congrats ! Well-done!!

Dr. Trimurthy Sairam,

New Delhi, India

Congratulations.

The exposition of alpha ragas
is very good.

Dr. K.V.N Rao, Gurugram,
India

Thank you very much for
keeping me "upgraded".

Thomas Luchinger
Switzerland

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THE JOY OF SINGING TOGETHER



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Read these at: www.sunadavinodini.com

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