

**THYAGARAJA
ARADHANA
SOUVENIER**

March 18, 1989



With Compliments Of

SRUTI

The India Music & Dance Society
Of The Delaware Valley

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The India Music & Dance Society

The Delaware Valley, U.S.A.

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Editorial Comments

We are happy to bring to you this Souvenir on the occasion of the 3rd Thyagaraja Aradhana, celebrated here in the Delaware Valley by SRUTI, The India Music and Dance Society. We have tried to maintain a balanced composition of articles, so that reading would be easy and pleasant. Thus, you will find narrative articles, such as the Biography of Thyagaraja, analytical and appreciative articles, such as the philosophy of Thyagaraja, and interactive items, namely musical puzzles.

In putting these articles together, we encountered two issues that required editorial choices. One was regarding the way various Sanskrit-derived words were written. Although it was possible to have adopted a uniform style for all the articles, we decided to keep the preferences of the individual authors of the articles. In typing the Ghana Rāga Pancharathna kirthanas, we have consistently distinguished long vowels by placing an accent sign atop the letter, as à,è,ì,ò,ù. Moreover, we have separated long phrases for easier reading (using a hyphen or + sign in case of a 'sandhi'). The other issue was regarding the year of Thyagaraja's birth. There does not appear to be complete agreement in published literature. (The years 1767, 1759, 1783 have all been used). Thus, we tried to show this state of the situation, without selecting anyone.

Finally, we would like to thank the contributors of the various articles, who completed the job enthusiastically and within the short time frame allotted to them.

Editorial Committee:

Chitrapu Prabhakar,
Uma Prabhakar,
A. Srinivasa Reddy.

March 18, 1989.

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Sri Thyàgarāja

GHANA RÀGA PANCHARATHNA KIRTANAS

1. Nàta Ràga - Àdi Thàla

Jagada+ananda-kàraka Jaya Jànaki Pràna-nàyaka

1. Gagana+adhipa Satkulaja Ràja Ràjeswara
Sugunàkara Sura-sèvyà Bhavya-dàyaka Sada Sakala
2. Amara-thàraka Nichaya-kumuda-hitha Pari-pùrna+anagha
Sura Sura-bhùja Dadhi-payòdhi-vàsa Harana
Sundara-thara Vadana Sudhà-maya Vachò-brunda Gòvinda
Sànanda Màvara+ajaràpta Subhakara+anèka
3. Nigama Nīraja+amruta Poshaka+animisha-vairi
Vàrida Samīrana Khaga-thuranga Satkavi Hrudàlaya Aganitha
Vànara+adhipa Nathàmghri Yuga
4. Indra-nīla-mani Sannibhàpa-ghana Chandra
Sùrya-nayana+apramèya Vagindra Janaka Sakalèsa Subhra
Nàgèndra-sayana Samana-vairi Sannuta
5. Pàda Vijitha Mauni-sàpa Sava Paripàla Vara-mantra Grahana
Lòla Parama Sànthā-chittha Janakaja+adhipa Saròja-bhava
Varada+akhila
6. Srushti-sthityanta-kàraka Amita-kàmita Phalada Asamàna
Gàthra Sachìpathi Suthàbdhi Sudhàkara Kusuma Vimàna
Surasàripu Karàbja
7. Lālitcharana Avaguna Suragana Mada-harana
Sanàtanà-janutha
8. Om-kàra Panjara-kīra Purahara Saròjabhava Kēsava+adi Rùpa

- Vàsava-ripu Janakànthaka Kalà-dharàpta Ghrunàkara
 Saranàgatha Janapàlana Sumanò-ramana Nirvikàra
 Nigama-sàra-thara
9. Kara-dhrutha Sarajàla+asura Mada+apaharanà Vanisura
 Suràvana Kavina Bilaja Mauni Kruta-charitra Sannuta Sri
 Thyàgaràja Sannutha
10. Puràna-purusha Nruvara+athmaja+asritha Para+adhina
 Khara-viràdha-ràvana Viràvana Anagha Paràsara Manòhara
 Avikruta Thyàgaràja Sannutha
11. Aganitha-guna Kanaka-chèla Sàlavidalana Arunàbha
 Samàna-charana Apàra Mahima+adbhutha Sukavijana
 Hrut-sadana Sura-muni-gana Vihita Kalasa Niranidhijà-ramana
 Pàpa Gaja Nrusimha Thyàgaràja+adi-nutha

2. Gowla Ràga - Àdi Thàla

- Dudukù-gala Nannè Dora-koduku Bròchurà Enthò
1. Kadu Durvishaya-krushtudai Gadiya Gadiyaku Nindàru
2. Sri Vanitha Hruthkumudabja Avàng-mànasa Gòchara
3. Sakala Bhùthamula-yandu Nivai-yundagà Madi-lèka-bòyina
4. Chiruta-pràyamula-nàdè Bhajanàmruta Rasavihina
 Kutarkudaina
5. Paradhanamula-koraku Norula Madi-karaga-balki Kadupu-
 nimpa Thirigi-natti
6. Thana-madini Bhuvini Saukhyapu Jivanamè Yanuchu Sadà

- Dinamulu Gadipè
7. Thèliyani Nata-vita-kshudrulu Vanitalu Svavasamauta
 Kupadisinchi Santasilli Swara-layambu Lerungakanu
 Silàthmulai Subhakthulaku Samànamanu
8. Dhrushtiki Sàrambagu Lalanà Sadanàrbhaka Sènàmitha
 Dhanàdulanu, Dèvadi-Dèva Nera Nammithi-gàkanu, Nì
 Padàbja-Bhajanambu Marachina
9. Chakkani Mukha Kamalambunu Sadà Nà Madilò Smarana
 Lèkanè Durmadandha Janula Kòri Pari-thàpamulachè Dagili
 Nogili Durvishaya Duràsalanu Ròyalèka Sathathama
 Paràdhinai Chapalachitthudanaina
10. Mānavathanu Durlabha-manuchu Nenchi Paramānanda-
 monda-lèka; Mada Matsara Kāma Lōbha Mōhulaku Dāsudai
 Mōsabōthi Gāka; Modati-kulajudaguchu Bhuvini Sudrula
 Panulu Salpuchu Nuntini Gāka; Narāddhamulanu Rōya Rasa
 Vihinamayinanu Sādhimpa Thàrumàru
11. Sathulaku Konnallasthikai Suthulaku Konnàllu
 Dhanathathulakai Thirigithinayya Thyàgaràjāptha Ituvanti

3. Àrabhi Ràga - Àdi Thàla

Sàdhinchane O Manasà

1. Bòdhinchina Sanmàrga-Vachanamula Bònku-chèsi
Thà-pattinattu
2. Samayàniki Thagu Matalàdenè
3. Dèvaki Vasudèvula Nèginchinatu
4. Rangèsudu Sadganga Janakudu Sangitha Sampradàyakudu
5. Gòpì-Manòradha Mosanga-lèkanè Gèliyu Chèsè-vàdu
6. Vanithala Sadà Sokka Jèyuchunu Mrokka Chèsè
Paramàtmu-dadhiyu-gàka Yasòdha Thanayundanchu
Mudhambunanu Muddhu-betta Navvuchundu Hari
7. Parama Bhaktha Vatsaludu Suguna Pàràvârundu
Àjanmam-anghudì Kali Bàdhala Thìrchu
Vàdanuchunè-hrudayambujamuna Jùchuchundaga
8. Harè Ràmachandra Raghukulèsa Mrudubhàsha Sèshasayana
Paranàri Sòdharà Javiràja Thuranga Ràjaràja Vinutha
Niràmayàpaghana Sarasìruha Dhalàksha Yanuchu
Vèdukonnanu Thà Bròvakanu
9. Sri Venkatèsa Suprakàsa Sarvònnatha Sajjanamànasa
Nikèthana Kankàmbaradhara Lasanmakuta Kundala Viràjitha
Harè! Yanuchu Nè Pogadagà Thyàgaràja-gèyudu
Mànàvèndrudaina Ràmachandrudu
10. Samayàniki Thagu Matalàdene; Sadhbhakthula Nadatha
Litlanenè Amarikagà Nà; Pùja-konenè Alugavaddhanenè;
Vimukhulathò Jèrabòku-manenè; Vetha Galgina
Thàlukommanenè; Damasamàdi Sukhadàyakudagu Sri
Thyàgaràjanuthudu Chentha Ràkanè

4. Varàli Ràga - Àdi Thàla

Kana Kana Ruchirà Kanakavasana Ninnu

1. Dina Dinamunu Manasuna Chanavuna Ninnu
2. Pàlugàru Mòmunu Sri Yapàra Mahima Danaru Ninnu
3. Kala Kala-manu Mukha-kala Galigina Sìtha Kulukuchu
Ora-kannulachè Ninnu
4. Bālarkàbhasu Chèla Manimaya Mālālamkrutha Kamdhara
Sarasijāksha Varaka Pòla Suruchira Kiritadhara Sathathambu
Manasàraga
5. Sàpathnìmāthayow Suruchichè-karna Sùlamaina-màta Vīnula
Chuirukkana Thàlaka Sri Harini Dhyānimchi Sukhimpaga-lèda
Yatu
6. Mrugamadalalāma Subhanitala Varajatāyu Mòkshaphalada
Pavanamānasutudu Nīdhu Mahima Delpa Sita Thelisi Valachi
Sokkalèdharīthi Ninnu
7. Sukhāspada Vimukhambudhara Pavana Vidēhamānasa
Vihārāptha Surabhūja Mānitha Gunāmka Chidānanda Khaga
Thuranga Dhrutaradhānga Parama Dayākara Karunārāsa
Varunālaya Bhayāpahārā Sri Raghupathē
8. Kāminchi Prēmamīra Karamula Nīdu Pādakamalamula
Battukonuvādu Sākshi Rāmanāma Rasikudu Kailāsa
Sadhanudu Sākshi Mariyu Nārada Parāsara Suka Saunaka
Purandara Nagajā Dharaja Mukhyulu Sākshigāda Sundarēsa
Sukha Kalāmbudhi Vāsāsrithulakē
9. Sathathamū Prēma Pūrithudagu Thyàgarāja nuta mukhajitha
Kumudahitha Varada Ninnu

5. Sri Ràga - Àdi Thàla

- Endarò Mahànubhàvulu+Andariki Vandanamul+endarò
1. Chanduru Varnuni Anda-chandamunu Hrudaya+aravindamunu Jùchi Brahma+ananda+manubhavinchu Vâr+endarò
 2. Sàma-gàna-lòla Manasija-làvanya Dhanya-mùrdhanyul+endarò
 3. Mânasa Vana-chara Vara Sanchàramu Nilipi Mùrthi Bàguga Podaganè Vâr+endarò
 4. Saraguna Pàdamulaku Svàntamanu Saròjamunu Samarpanamu Sèyuvâr+endarò
 5. Pathitha Pàvanudanè Paràthparuni Gurinchi Paramàrdhamagu Nija-màrgamuthonu Pàduchunu Sallàpamuthò Swara-laya+adi Ràgamula Teliyu Vâr+endarò
 6. Hari-guna Manulagu Saramulu Galamuna Sòbhillu Bhaktha-kotul+ilalò Thelivito Chelimitò Karuna+kalgi Jagamellanu Sudhà-drushtichè Bròchu Vâr+endarò
 7. Hoyalu-mìra Nadalu+kalgu Sarasuni Sadà Kanula Jùchuchunu Pulaka-sarìrulai Ananda Payòdhi Nimagnulai Mudambunanu Yasamu Gala Vâr+endarò
 8. Parama Bhàgavatha Mauni-vara Sasivibhakara Sanaka-sanandana Digisa Sura Kimpurusha Kanakasipu-suta Nàrada Thumburu Pavana-sùnu Bàlachandra-dhara Suka-saròja-bhava Bhù-sura-varulu Parama-pàvanulu

Ghanulu Sàsvathulu Kamala-bhava-sukhamu

Sada+anubhavulu Gàka Endarò

9. Nì-Mènu Nàma Vaibhavammulanu Nì Paràkrama Dhairyamula Sànthà Mânasamu Nìvulanu Vachana Satyamunu Raghuvara! Nì Yeda Sadbhakthiyu Janinchakanu Durmathamulanu Kalla Chèsinatti Nì Madi Neringi Samthathambunanu Guna-bhajana+ananda Kìrtanamu Sèyu Vâr+endarò
10. Bhàgavatha Ràmàyana Gita+adi Sruthi Sàsthra Purànapu Marmamulan Siva+adi Shan-mathamula Gùdhamula Muppadi Mukkòti Sura+antharangamula Bhàvamula Neringi Bhàva-ràga Laya+adi Saukhyamulache Chira+ayuvul+kaligi Nirapadhi Sukha+atmulai Thyàgaràja+aptulaina Vâr+endarò
11. Prema Muppiri-gonu-vèla Nàmamunu Dalachè-vàru Ràma-bhakthudaina Thyàgaràja-nuthuniki Nija-dàsul+endarò

SRUTI

Sitaramayya Ari

Though we Indians speak different languages, we have a unifying and proud heritage in classical music and dances. The regional associations make a valiant effort to arrange dance programs and concerts in Karnatik music. However, the small numbers in each of these organisations and the difficulties they face in reaching out to a larger audience limits the number of such programs. Financial limitations make it impossible for individuals to invite a top ranking artist to perform in our area. There was a need in the Delaware Valley for an organization to fill the cultural needs of people who love classical music and dances. SRUTI filled that void very ably and effectively since September 1986. The organization was founded in Spring 1986 by a group of people drawn from different regional associations with M.M. Subramaniam as its convener. Its objectives were to arrange classical music and dance programs with artists from our area as well as those coming from India, and to serve as a common ground for all with interest in music and dance. Since I had the good fortune of being associated with the organisation from the beginning, it is difficult to be unbiased, but it is fair to say that SRUTI has done remarkably well in meeting these goals in such a short time.

The number and quality of dance as well as music programs SRUTI organised in the last three years makes Delaware Valley a good place to live. The first program of SRUTI, a concert by M.L. Vasanthakumari, was well attended and gave a confidence to the organisation that their efforts are appreciated. Subsequent programs by Jothi Raghavan, Sheela Ramaswamy, Vairamangalam, Lakshmi & Chandrika Kurup, Lalgudi Srimathy, Kadari Gopalnath and others and more recently the elegant performance by Padma Subramaniam go to show that the organization is serious about its commitment to foster the classical arts in this area. However, there are still avenues to be found. For example, when SRUTI makes an effort to organise a concert by a local artist, attendance is poor. Since talented people in our area have to be encouraged also, the art lovers in this area have to make an effort to help SRUTI in fulfilling this goal.

SRUTI's effort to bring people together from different regional organisations has also been well responded to. Tyagaraja Aradhana was organised in February 1987 with the cooperation of Kannada, Tamil and Telugu associations and has since been an annual event symbolising that cooperation. Let us hope that this will continue for many years to come.

Looking back, I cannot but realise that SRUTI is only about 3 years old, but has grown to be remarkably mature and responsible organisation doing a much needed service to the Indian community in the Delaware Valley.

Did You Know ?

Nàrada is considered to be the divine musician and a music teacher. He is acknowledged to be the author of 'Swarànavam', also known as 'Nàrada Kataka'. Apparently, Thyagaraja was blessed with the knowledge of this work.

According to musical tradition, there are two other such works: 1) 'Vyasa Kataka' attributed to Bàdaràyana Vyasa - the 'author' of the musical 'Sàma Vèda', 2) 'Hanumat Kataka' attributed to Hanuman.

(From the Introduction written by Dr. Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna in the book "Thyagaraja Kirthanalu- Visèsha Vivaranamu: Vol 1", by Kalluri Virabhadra Sastri.)

TYAGARAJA ARADHANA

Origins and Significance

M.M. Subramaniam

Tyagaraja, variously known as Tyaga Brahman, Tyagayya, Tyagaraja Swami is recognized as one of the greatest composers of classical music of all time. Born in 1759 (1767 according to some scholars) in Tiruvarur, he lived most of his life in the small town of Tiruvaiyaru of Tanjavur district in Tamil Nadu. A prolific composer, he is reputed to have composed thousands of kritis in a large variety of ragas, mostly in the praise of Lord Sri Rama. The three branches of disciples, largely credited with preserving the valuable treasures of Tyagaraja's songs, are the Thillaisthnam, Walajapet and Umayalpuram school of sishya parampara.

Tyagaraja died on the Bahula Panchami day in the year 1847. A few days prior to his death, he took the vows of a sanyasi. Thus, following the Hindu tradition, his body was buried and not cremated and a samadhi was raised at the place of his burial. After Tyagaraja's death, many of his disciples apparently returned to their respective places. However, on the anniversary of his death, calculated according to the lunar calendar, some disciples would gather at the samadhi to pay homage to their great guru by singing his compositions. However, only early in this century, steps were taken to celebrate a more structured Aradhana, essentially due to the efforts of a well known singer of those times, Bangalore Nagarathna Ammal. Thanks to her, a super structure was raised at the samadhi, where musicians would sing/perform on the anniversary.

It is well known that Tyagaraja never relied on the munificence of rich patrons despite his considerable talent and genius. Instead, he subsisted on 'Uncha Vritti', depending on the alms of his neighbors. The loving care of his disciples supplemented his meager existence. In keeping with this tradition, on the Aradhana day, musicians go around the town singing Utsava/Bhajana sampradaya kritis and collect alms. The music for the songs is fairly simple so that almost anyone can join in this group.

The musicians then gather at the samadhi for the singing of the Pancha ratna kritis. These are, of course, weighty kritis and rendered only by the senior and highly proficient vidwans.

It is traditional that all, including the leading, musicians sing at the Aradhana without taking any remuneration. They sing only Tyagaraja songs often without elaborate alapana and swara prastaram. It is their way of paying homage to the great composer.

Over the years, attending the Aradhana at Tiruvaiyaru has become a point of pilgrimage for Carnatic music lovers. Many a career is launched at this time. Nowadays, the Aradhana celebrations last 2 to 3 days. The organizers ensure that anyone who wants to sing/perform on an instrument is given a chance. They also make arrangements for food and other necessities of hundreds of devotees who come to participate. All India Radio and Doordarshan relay parts of the Aradhana events for the benefit of millions in the rest of the country.

This tradition is now observed in many parts of the world wherever Carnatic music lovers gather. In many cities and communities in USA, including the Greater Delaware Valley, it is getting to be an annual event looked forward by many music enthusiasts. However, we defer to the weather and celebrate on different dates but always on a weekend! The latest day is perhaps the Chicago aradhana which usually takes place on the Saturday of the Memorial day weekend in May!

In almost all cases in this country, the format is similar. In our Delaware Valley, the function, organized by 'SRUTI' with the cooperation of the Kannada, Tamil and Telugu associations, the day starts with group singing of a few utsava sampradaya kritis and Pancharatna kritis. This is followed by individual participation including children and young musicians. The day ends with a mini concert. Food is served.

It is a day that we join together to pay homage to the peerless composer whose great compositions have dominated the concert world of Carnatic music. Apart from the obvious quality of his musical output, some of the other reasons that people hold Tyagaraja in awe and reverence are his simplicity, great degree of humility, devotion to the art, and near total lack of ego or

self-aggrandizement. It behooves us to remember these qualities as we gather to celebrate the Aradhana.

!! MATCH THE RÀGA !!

Uma Prabhakar

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. E Dàri Samcharinturà Ika Palkarà | A. Kharaharapriya |
| 2. Kàlaharanamèlarà Harè | B. Gowlipanthu |
| 3. Enta Muddò Enta Sogasò | C. Sri Ranjani |
| 4. Entani Nè Varnintu Sabarìbhàgyamu | D. Màrga Hindòlam |
| 5. Chakkani Ràja Màrgamulundaga | E. Thòdi |
| 6. Thera Tiyagaràdà Lòni | F. Mukhàri |
| 7. Sundari Nì Divyarùpamunu Chùchi | G. Mòhana |
| 8. Chalamèlarà Sàkètha Ràma | H. Kalyàni |
| 9. Swararàga Sudharasayutha Bhakthi | I. Bindumàlini |
| 10. Sogasugà Mridangatàlamu | J. Suddha Sàveri |
| 11. Nanupàlìmpaga Nadachivachitivò | K. Sruthi Ranjani |
| 12. Enduku Dayaràdura Sriràmachandra | L. Sankaràbharana |

Solutions on Page 25

SHREE THYAAGARAAJA

S. Suma
(13 years; 9th Grade)

Shree Thyaagaraaja was a great composer and musician of South India. He composed over 24,000 songs in more than 200 raagas. Only about 600 of them are known to us now. He exquisitely combined raagas, thaala, and lyrics in very simple language so that even the laymen could understand and enjoy his music. He was a contemporary of Muththuswaami Deekshitar and Shyaama Shaasthri, the other two eminent musician-composers of that time. These three men are known as the *thrimoorthis* of Karnaatak music.

Shree Thyaagaraaja was born in Thiruvaaroor, a small town in Tamil Naadu, India, in 1767 (or 1759 according to some scholars). He lived in a time when the art of Karnaatak music was at its peak. His grandfather, Girijabrahma, was a great scholar of Samskr̥tha and Thelugu. Thyaagaraaja's father, Raamabrahma, was the last of Girijabrahma's five children, and Thyaagaraaja was the last of Raamabrahma's three sons. Both Raamabrahma and his wife Shaanthaa Dèvi, knew much about Sangeetha. While his father taught him Thelugu and Samskr̥tha, Shaanthaa Dèvi taught Thyaagaraaja Purandhara Daasa's kr̥this. In order to give better education to Thyaagaraaja, Raamabrahma moved his family to Thiruveiyyaaru. No one knows how much formal education Thyaagaraaja had. But his knowledge of Samskr̥tha and Thelugu must have been great enough that he was able to compose beautiful songs with appropriate words. At an early age, Thyaagaraaja fell in love with Raamaayana which his father used to read often. Soon, Lord Raama became his favorite personal god.

Even as a boy, Thyaagaraaja showed great musical talent. When he was only ten years old, Thyaagaraaja composed his first two pieces: *Namò Namò Raaghavaaya* and *Thavadaasòham*, both in Punnaagavaraali raaga. Whenever he went out on errands, he used to stop and listen to the music lessons being given by a well known musician of the time, Sonti Veena Venkataramanayya. At the request of Thyaagaraaja's father Sonti, gladly accepted the promising boy as his disciple. Just in one year's time, Sonti was

able to teach Thyaagaraaja all that he knew in Karnaatak music.

As Thyaagaraaja's fame grew, the king of Thanjaavoor invited him to sing in his court for a hefty reward. Even though his brother Jalpèsha urged him to accept the invitation, Thyaagaraaja refused the offer, stating that he would only sing for Lord Raama and not for anybody else. At that time, he composed the song *Nidhi chaala sukhamaa* in raaga kalyaani. Angered by his refusal to sing in king's court, his brother Jalpèsha took Thyaagaraaja's Raama idol and threw it into the nearby Kaavèri river. Thyaagaraaja was deeply hurt. In this state, he composed many songs expressing his sorrow at being separated from his beloved Raama. One of them was *Nèrendu vethukuduraa* (Hè Raama, where shall I search for you?). To his great joy, one day, by chance, he found the idol on the riverbed.

Thyaagaraaja's most important songs are called 'Pancharathna Krithis' or the five gems of composition. They are in the raagas Naata, Goula, Aarabhi, Shree and Varaali. These krithis are sung at all Thyaagaraaja Aaraadhanas right after pooja.

Thyaagaraaja composed music extemporaneously, pouring out his devotion to Raama. His disciples diligently recorded these songs. That is how we are able to enjoy at least some of those songs today. In turn, many of those disciples, such as Veena Kuppa Iyer and Umayaalpuram Bhaagavathar, became experts in Karnaatak music themselves.

After a full and a glorious life, Thyaagaraaja passed away on Jan 6, 1847. Yet, through his beautiful music, he lives on in the hearts and minds of all Karnaatak music lovers. Just as Purandara Daasa is called 'Sangeetha Pithamaha' or *Grandfather of Karnaatak Music*, Thyaagaraaja is called 'Sangeetha Pithaa' or the *Father of Karnaatak Music*.

Thyaagabrahmaaya Namaha
Salutations to Thyaagaraaja

THYÀGARÀJA POET, COMPOSER, AND MUSICIAN

A.K. Srinivasan

Thyàgaràja was a prolific composer besides being a poet and a musician. His lyrics have all the qualities of a poem. As a composer, he brought out the essence of a raga to stress the meaning of the words and the intricacies of the raga. He was well read in the Upanishads, Bhàgavatha purānas, and the epics so that he could expound the philosophy in a simple manner in his compositions. His model was Pōtana's writings which were simple while profound in philosophical thoughts. As a musician he expounded the importance of nāda and tāla. His compositions such as *Swara Rāga Sudhārāsa* in Sankarābharanam and *Sogasuga Mridanga Tālamu* in Sri Ranjani are examples of the importance of raga and tāla while in *Sōbhilla* (Jaganmōhini) he prescribes the way a song should be sung.

His compositions please the initiated as well as the un-initiated in music. There is simplicity in language and complexity in the musical structure with nuances in words and swarās. As a musician, Thyàgaràja analyzed the beauties of various ragas and presented them in such a manner, the compositions give a well trained musician suitable places for elaborations (niraval and kalpanāsvaras) to show the performer's talents. The sangathis in his compositions are picturesque and varied such as raga bhāva and sàhitya bhāva sangathis. To bring out the essence of the raga and sàhitya bhāvās most of his compositions are of medium tempo. Sangathis in *Najeevādhāra* (Bilahari) and *Dārini Telusukonti* (Suddhasāveri) are examples of raga bhāva sangathis whereas *Mārubbalka* (Sri Ranjani) and *Kālaharanamelara* (Suddhasāveri) are of sàhitya bhāva sangathis.

As a poet he has used alliterations, aphorisms, and proverbs etc., to embellish and to bring out the essence of bhakti and philosophy. As a musician cum poet, he combined the sàhitya and swarās. An example of this is the swarākshara in the song *Sāmajavaragamana* (Hindōlam) where the sōlfas Sa, Ma, Ni, Ga, Ma, Dha form the words of the lyric. He used words which have several meanings. For example, in *Anupama gunāmbhudhi* (Atāna) the phrase Janakajāmāta has two meanings. Janaka Jāmāta

means son-in-law of Janaka while Janakajà Māta means Sita's mother Bhoomi Devi. Besides these forms Thyàgarāja has also used similies, rhetorical interrogation, hyperbole, euphemism etc., in his compositions.

Thyàgarāja has brought out in his compositions the nine rasās. Punṇāgavarālī is a rāga which can have only one rasa while Sankarābharana or Kalyāṇi can bring out several rasās. The composition *Kshira sāgara sayana* (Devagāndhari) brings out the ocean's calmness and tranquility but also reveals its depth. *Jagadānanda kāraka* (Nāta), the pancharathna kriti, represents a heroic poem praising Sri Rama. *Sāntamu leka* (Sāma) in its opening word itself shows the tranquility.

Besides composing kritis which can be sung by well trained musicians, he composed kīrtanas which can be sung by groups. He also composed groups of songs named as Pancharathna kīrtanas. In this category are the well known Ghana Rāga Pancharathna sung during Thyàgarāja Arādhana festivals, Thiruvottiyur Pancharathnam, and the Lālgudi Pancharathnam and others. Regarding the writing of Ghana rāga panchrathnam, it is said that many musicians of his time failed to catch the musical significance of his vast number of kritis and criticized that he wrote only light poems. Also his disciples desired him to compose tana varnas. *Sādhinchane* in Arabhi was his first composition in this group which is typically in tana varna style. The Sri rāga composition - *Endaro Mahānubhāvulu* came second. *Dudukugala* in Gowla also belongs to this category. The other two in Nāta and Varālī have neither ettugada swaras nor the anubhandam which are used in varna compositions. It may be mentioned that Gowla rāga which was supposed to be of limited scope became a major rāga in his compositions.

His Divya Nāma kīrtanas of one hundred songs are intended to be sung by groups of devotees. After he completed these songs, he composed *Rāgarathna Mālikache* in Reetigowla in which he says "Bhāgavatottamulu goodi pādē keertanamulata".

His compositions are set in various tālas and in different eduppus. For example, *Kaddana variki* in Todi starts after one-fourth count (example of anāgata eduppu). The anupallavi of *Kshīnamai tiruga* in Mukhāri starts before a count, an example of atīta eduppu.

Thyàgarāja was a musical experimenter in the sense he composed songs in rare rāgas some of which may have been his own creations. These rāgas are not found in early music literature. He refers to these rāgas in some of his compositions as 'vintha rāgālu' (novel rāgās). In his composition *Muchchata brahmādulaku* (Madhyamavati) he says that these rāgas lend scope for elaborations in alāpana and/or swaraprastāras. One may mention some of these rāgas here: Jaganmōhini, Chittaranjani, Dēvakriya, Dilipaka, Jayantasena, Manjari etc.

Thyàgarāja, in addition to his compositions, wrote operas. In his time, there were village plays and dance dramas and he was not inclined to write a dance drama, instead he began to think of writing a pure musical drama without dances. Thus his operas were born. He wrote three operas, *Prahlāda Bhakti Vijayam*, *Nowka Charitam*, and *Sītarama Vijayam*. The first is a long one of five acts, the second, *Nowka charitam*, is a shorter opera. The third, *Sītarama Vijayam*, not so well known, is the story based on Uttara Rāmāyanam. The famous kriti *Mā Jānaki* in Kāmbhodi rāga belongs to the third opera. Some of the songs in *Prahlāda Bhakti vijayam* are kirtana types and some are kriti types. In these operas he has followed the rules of Indian operas. One of these is that the opening and closing songs should be in the same rāga. In *Prahlāda Bhakti vijayam* the opera opens with *Sri Ganapatini* in Saurāshtra and the mangala, also in the same rāga, is the well known *Ni nāma rūpamulaku*. In *Nowka charitam* the opening song is *Sringārinchukoni* and the closing one is the mangalam *Mākulamunakhiha* both in Surati rāga. In his operas, songs and verses are well contrasted to relieve the monotony. One can perceive that *Prahlāda Bhakti vijayam* was inspired by bhakti and *Nowka charitam* was conceived with the idea leading to madhura bhakti.

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TEST YOUR CARNATIC MUSIC & THYAGARAJA IQ

Uma Roy (Editor of SANGEETHAM)



Look at the pictures of the great composers in Carnatic Music and answer the questions by writing the number corresponding to the picture for questions 1-8. Questions 9-25 are only on Saint Thyagaraja.

1. Which of the above pictures is that of Saint Thyagaraja?
2. Who among the above composers is called the PITHAMAHA (Grandfather) of Carnatic Music?
3. Which of them form the Trimurthis of Carnatic Music?
4. Who is the oldest of the Trimurthis?
5. a) Who can be called the father of Carnatic Music? b) Which of them is a King?
6. Which of the above composers composed Sarali swara-s, Janta swara-s etc?
7. Whose compositions are mostly in Sanskrit?
8. Which of the above composers sent his son to Thyagaraja to learn music?
9. How many kritis has Thyagaraja composed in Thodi ..2,20,200,12?
10. In what year was Thyagaraja born?
11. How old was he when he composed his first kriti?
12. Who was Thyagaraja's guru?
13. Thyagaraja loved two things most. What were they?
14. What was the main God or Goddess he composed on?
15. Name other deities he composed on.
16. Who invented the use of Sangathis?
17. In how many Raga-s has Thyagaraja composed his songs ..20,200,2000,50?
18. Which Raga did he donate the use of to another musician called Tribhuvana Swaminatha Ayyar?
19. Which were Thyagaraja's last compositions?
20. What did he see on 'Giripaina'? In what raga did he sing this?
21. How many sets of Pancharatna kriti-s did he compose?
22. Can you name these sets?
23. Name the operas Thyagaraja wrote.
24. If Thyagaraja was Johnson, who was Boswell?
25. Thyagaraja composed this song in Durbar Raga one night when he was traveling with Veena Kuppa Ayyar in a palanquin with some gold meant for some puja-s and thieves came to attack them, but were driven away by two boys. Which was this Kriti? Who were the two boys?

(ANSWERS ON PAGE 21)

Some Classes of Tyagaraja Compositions

M.M. Subramaniam

Tyagaraja is reputed to have composed thousands of kritis. But only a few hundreds of them are extant. Most of them are in the praise of his 'Ishta Deivata' Sri Rama. In his kritis, Tyagaraja cajoles Him, implores Him for help, treats Him as a friend philosopher and guide. In some of them, he makes fun of Him for taking the credit away from others, e.g. *Ma Janaki* (Kambodhi) and he even indulges in ninda sthuthi - i.e. praise by feigned criticism e.g. *Manumu ledha* (Hamir Kalyani). Interspersed in these kritis are words of wisdom, philosophical and spiritual. There are also classes of kritis which are often labeled under some catogaries. I give below a few of them.

a) Bhajana/Utsava Sampradaya kritis:

These are compositions containing simple lyrics and fairly elementary dhatu. Most of the range of the music is little more than one octave. Thus even noviates can easily sing/perform them. In fact, these songs are invariably sung by groups and are rarely heard in concerts. The well known musician Balamurali Krishna with his group has recently recorded quite a few of them in commercially produced LP's and cassettes.

b) Pancharatna kritis:

The other extreme in terms of complexity of music are the famous five gems, together called Pancharatna kritis. They are: *Jagadhaanda karaka* (Nattai), *Dudukugala* (Goula), *Sadhinchane O Manasa* (Arabhi), *Kana kana ruchira* (Varali), *Endaro Mahanu bhavulu* (Sri).

These are superb compositions requiring great proficiency to render full justice to them. They, especially the Arabhi and Sri compositions, are great favorites among vidwans and are often heard in concerts.

Apart from the above classes, there are groups of five songs each, which Tyagaraja is supposed to have composed when he visited various pilgrimage centers. They are also known as pancharatna kritis with the names of the Kshetra prefixed. Some of these are:

1) Kovur pancharatna: *Sambho mahadeva* (Pantuvarali); *Kori*

sevimpa (Karahara priya); *Nammi vachini* (Kalyani); *E vasudha* (Sahana); *Sundareswaruni* (Sankarabharanam).

2) Tiruvottiyur pancharatna: *Darini telusu konti* (Suddha Saveri); *Sundari nanninderilo* (Begada); *Sundari ni divya rupamu* (Kalyani); *Kanna thalli* (Saveri); *Sundari ninnu* (Arabhi).

3) Lalgudi pancharatna: *Gathi neevani* (Todi); *Mahithe* (Kambodhi); *Esa pahimam* (Kalyani); *Lalithe* (Bhairavi); *Deva sri* (Madhyamavathi).

It is also possible to include another category which may be called anecdotal; i.e. kritis which are associated with some anecdotes in Tyagaraja's life. The most famous of them is perhaps *Nidi Chala Sukhama* (Kalyani). A description of them may have to be postponed for another article.

Finally, there are two operas composed by Tyagaraja:- *Prahlada Bhaktha Vijayam* and *Nauka Charitram*. Although the operas themselves are rarely performed in their entirety, compositions from them are often heard in concerts.

Answers to I.Q. Test

1. [2, Thyagaraja]; 2. [1, Purandara Dasa]; 3. [2,3,5]; 4. [5, Syama Sastri]; 5a. [2]; 5b. [4, Swati Tirunal]; 6. [1]; 7. [3]; 8. [5]; 9. [20]; 10. 1767; 11. [10]; 12. Sonti Veena Venkataramanayya; 13. Lord Rama and Music; 14. Rama; 15. Tirupati Venkataramana, Ranganatha, Dharmasamvardhini etc.; 16. Thyagaraja; 17. 200; 18. Anandabhairavi; 19. Paramathmudu (ragadheeswari) & Parithapamu (Manohari); 20. Lord Rama on a hill - He promised Thyagaraja in a dream that He would take him to His kingdom in ten days; 21. Ghana Raga, Kovur, Sri Rangan, Tiruvottiyur & Lalgudi; 22. see 21; 23. Prahlada Bhakthi Vijayam, Nauka Charitam; 24. Walajapet Venkataramana Bhagavatar; 25. Mundu Venake, Rama & Lakshmana.

MUSIC AS A PATH AND SALVATION

Thyagaraja's Philosophy

H.V. Rajagopal

A distinguishing feature of Thyagaraja as a composer is that he has left a large number of Kritis on the art of music itself. In these Kritis, he expounds his concept of music, its purpose and practice, and most important, its value as a yoga and siddhi, a path and a realization. There are also other Kritis, in which he makes references to the art or to the Supreme Being (or to his personal god Srirama) using musical imagery. A study of these Kritis would be most rewarding as they provide an insight into his mind and heart that, unfortunately, today's concert stage does not offer.

True to the Indian tradition, Thyagaraja believed that the purpose of music, like that of all other arts, was spiritual upliftment. To him, all other uses of music were base, profane. "The only song worthy of the name is what is surely in the praise of the Lord," declares he in his Bhairavi Kritis *Rama Kodandarama*. In *Samayamu delisi* in Asaveri he states unequivocally "it is immaterial whether a song that does not refer to Srirama is sung or not." Devotion or unswerving attachment to the Supreme Being is, according to him, the most essential requirement for the proper course of music. The Dhanyasi Kritis *Sangita Jnanamu* makes it clear: "music without devotion would lead one astray; It is something sublime that great sages and saints have practised and that its real efficacy is known only to a person knowing the right and the wrong, and the worthlessness of worldly things, and one who has subdued the six inner enemies - lust, anger, avarice, delusion, elation and intolerance." Music is not for making a living, nor for self glorification or pleasing the rich and mighty for favors. As one committed to the path of Dharma, Thyagaraja says in his Ranjani Kritis *Durmargachara* that he cannot bring himself to flatter the wicked and the depraved for personal gains.

If one would spend his life time singing the praise of the Supreme Being with no other distractions and coveting no worldly possessions, such a life would be the best of all possible lives on earth (*narajanname narajanmamu*). "Who would be happier than

the one who sings tunelessly the Lord's name for ever?" he asks in his moving Kanada Kritis *Sukhi Yevaro* ('Nityamaina Susvarapu ganamuto, nirantaramu, Thyagarajanuta, sukhi yevaro ...'). The happiness that this 'sukhi' enjoys is no ordinary happiness, it is divine bliss, the ultimate goal of all spiritual aspiration. At this stage all conscious effort ceases and 'sukhi' seems to function effortlessly. Perhaps it is this effortlessness that Sage Yajnavalkya refers to in his Smṛti: "He who knows the truth of Vina music, is an expert in Srutis and their varieties, and understands tala, reaches the path of salvation without exertion". In Thyagaraja's view, knowledge of music not only makes it easier for one to reach the path of salvation, but it is also a prime requisite. He asks in *Mokshamugalada*, "How can one devoid of real devotion and knowledge of divine music attain salvation?" And he goes further yet. Music is not only a means for attaining salvation but salvation itself. It is not just a means to mukti but mukti itself. In his Mukhari song (*Sangitha sastra jnanamu*) he says that the knowledge of music gives the bliss of oneness with the Supreme Being. Again, in the famous Sankarabharana Kritis (*Svararaga sudharasa*) he says that bhakti combined with the life giving 'rasa' of svaras and ragas is itself heaven and salvation. It was Thyagaraja's conviction that while a jnani attains liberation after numerous births, he who has by nature a devoted mind and has knowledge of music is a liberated soul here on earth, a 'jeevanmukta.' He believed that those who have knowledge of svara, nada and omkara are true jeevanmuktas. This belief derives further strength by regarding the object of all devotion and pursuit as the embodiment of music itself. This again follows the Indian tradition, the most familiar example of which is for a dancer to regard Shiva as the supreme dancer (Nataraja). Thyagaraja refers to Rama as 'Sangitalola,' 'ganalola.' In the Sriraga Kritis *Endaro*, we hear of the Supreme Being being referred to as 'Samaganalola.' In *Sadhinchane*, Rama is 'Sangitha Sampradayakudu,' the maintainer of the musical tradition. Rama is 'Nadabrahmarup.' In *Nadasudharasa*, he regards sound (music) as having personified itself in Rama and uses beautiful musical imagery to expand the concept and evoke a picture of Rama: "the seven notes are the seven bells of the bow and the ragas the bow itself; the styles Dura, Naya, and Desya are the three strings of the bow; the steady pace the arrow, and the melodious and apt variations are his speech ..." By conceiving of the Supreme Being as the ultimate sound and immersing oneself in it ceaselessly, one

is in union with that Being. In that extraordinary Kriti in Kalyanavasantham, he tells himself 'Nadaloludai brahmananda mandave' -attain the bliss of brahmananda, O mind, by losing yourself in nada. To Thyagaraja, music thus is not only a means to an end, but the end itself. It is a Yoga as well as a Siddhi.

On the artistic plane, Thyagaraja's achievements are phenomenal. He expanded the horizons of Karnatak music to an extent that remains unmatched by anyone else. He brought into vogue many ragas. The number of compositions and their quality are truly extraordinary. In his hands, as well as those of Syama Sastry and Muthuswamy Dikshitar, the Kriti attained perfection of musical form and content. In his Sriranjani Kriti *Sogasuga*, one finds a definition of a Kriti, as it were: "Kritis which expound the true words of the exalted Upanishads, which are marked by correct placement of svaras and rhythmic turns and pauses, which reflect true devotion and vairagya, which are full of nine rasas and are as delectable as draksharasa." Note here the seemingly incompatible requirements of vairagya and being full of nine rasas. This clearly shows how both the spiritualist and the artist in him are at work here. It is the bhakti and vairagya that provide the proper path ('Sanmargamu') or direction to music as we have already noted in his *Sangitha jnanamu*. Another point to note here is the reference to 'draksharasa.' In Sanskrit literary criticism, two types of works are recognized: 'narikelapaka' and 'drakshapaka.' The first is a composition whose beauty lies hidden, which one will be able to appreciate only after some exertion (just as one has to break the shell of a coconut in order to get to the milk inside.) The other is a composition that can be enjoyed immediately. It is full of rasa, in and out, that can be tasted right away. Music, which of all arts, has the most immediate power to transport a person, falls aptly in the second category. Thyagaraja wants his compositions to preserve that intrinsic nature of music. No wonder, his Kritis have such wide appeal to novices and cogniscentis alike, whether the Kritis are the simple spontaneous outpourings of a bhakta and a mystic, or the most elaborately structured compositions of a master craftsman. It is also this draksharasa concept that perhaps makes him insist again and again on 'susvara,' music that is pleasing to the ear. In the Kriti *Sukhi yevare*, we already noted the reference to 'Susvarapu ganamu'. Again in the Kriti *Sogasuga*, the phrase 'Svarasuddhamut' appears, meaning maintaining purity of notes. In the Todi Kriti *Kaddanuvairiki*, where he lays down clear

directions for the practice of music, he again insists on 'Susvara:' "Nidura nirakarinchu, mudduga tambura batti, suddhamaina manasuche, susvaramuto, baddu tappaka, bhajiyinchu." "Casting off your sleep, sit down comfortably with your tambura, with a clear mind sing with devotion, intoning the svaras correctly and melodiously, according to the tradition." With all the insistence on 'Susvara,' it is sad to reflect how this very element has been most neglected in today's Karnatak music. The importance of tala is duly recognized, but not exaggerated as in present day music. The very beginning of *Sogasuga* is ecstatic as it refers to the joyful sound of a beautiful Mrdanga. This brings to mind a Kannada song of Purandara Dasa, who lived almost two centuries before Thyagaraja, in which he says "Tala beku, takka mela beku," meaning "we must have tala and the right accompaniments .. Yet, with all that, if love is absent, Hari won't listen to the song."

In Thyagaraja, we find a supreme example of the Indian artistic tradition. Through his artistic genius and his deeply spiritual way of life, he took the art of music to the noblest heights. In him, we find the ecstasy of a creative artist as well as the profound serenity of a Yogi. In him, the path and the goal are one.

(Based on material taken from "The Spiritual Heritage of Tyagaraja", by C. Ramanujachari & Dr. V. Raghavan, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1966.)

Solutions to **!! MATCH THE RAGA !!**

1 - K; 2 - J; 3 - I; 4 - F; 5 - A; 6 - B;
7 - H; 8 - D; 9 - L; 10 - C; 11 - G; 12 - E.

THE ROLE OF SAHITYA IN CARNATIC MUSIC

G. Sridhar

Music, it is often said, transcends the barriers of language. In the context of Indian music in general, and Carnatic music in particular, Sahitya - or the words that are put to music - constitutes one of the many elements such as the raga and the tala. But it is a vital component - one that enriches our understanding and appreciation of the entire composition. The impact of written or spoken words adds a new dimension even to those who enjoy music for its own sake. In this regard, one might say that there does exist a barrier of language which needs to be surmounted in order to get a more complete enjoyment from the music.

The evolution of Carnatic music in its present form has witnessed its growth from roots based on folk music which, by nature, has been a means of communicating simple ideas as well as abstruse philosophical concepts in a language that a common man can follow. It is precisely this genius of being able to express these ideas in the form of melodious music that Saint Thyagaraja is famous for. Compositions such as *Dwaithamu Sukhama*, *Teliyaleru Rama*, and *Entharo Mahanubhavulu* illustrate the wide spectrum of thought that has been portrayed in beautiful verse. I have often felt how much better my appreciation of these kritis and those of, say, Syama Sastri and Annamacharya could be had I known Telugu better. I feel from personal experience that I can derive more pleasure from the mere word-play of certain compositions, for instance, *Thyagaraja Yoga Vaibhavam* of Muthuswamy Dikshitar or *Ragi Thandeera* of Purandara Dasa.

There is a large body of musical literature in Carnatic music which can be transliterated and translated into other languages so that we can catch a glimpse of the sense of heightened awareness that great composers like Thyagaraja experienced during their lives. The perennial philosophy contained in those verse should be made accessible to every music lover by means of detailed expositions.

SABARI BHAGYAMU

Uma & Chitrapu Prabhakar

Oh, the good fortune of Good Old Sabari !
How can I ever describe it enough ?

Isn't this world so full
Of beautiful young women ?
But it is Good Old Sabari
that Lord Rama chose !
Oh, the good fortune of ...!

Yes, she served Him
To her heart's content,
Served Him delicious fruits,
And look what she got in return:
Punaràvrutthi rahitha Padamu !!
Oh, what a deal !!
The good fortune of!

The above is not an exact translation of the Thyagaraja's song "Enthani Nè Varninthunu, Sabari Bhagyamu". It is how he may have felt before he wrote that song! Like many other translations, it is a personal interpretation. Here follows a closer appreciation of Thyagaraja's original words.

Thyàgaràja:

1. Enthani Nè Varninthunu Sabari Bhagyamu
2. Dàmtulu Vara Kàntalu Jagamantha Nindiyundaga
3. Kanulàra Sèvinchi, Kammani Phalamula Nosagi, Thanuvu Pulakarimcha, Pàdayugamulaku Mrokki, Inakulapathi Samukhambuna Punaràvrutthi Rahitha Padamunu Pondina Thyagarajanuturàli Punyambunu.

Para #1: Sabari Bhagyamu ~ good fortune of Sabari; Nè Varninthunu ~ shall I describe?; Enthani ~ how much.

(Appreciation) In the use of 'Enthani', there is a possible pun. If you associate it with Sabari's Bhagyamu, it means that Sabari's bhagyamu is so great (..that I cannot possibly describe it). On the other hand, if you associate it with Nè Varninthunu, it means "how much can I describe Sabari's bhagyamu?"

Para #2: *Dàmtulu* ~ yogis; *Vara Kànthalu* ~ Noble women; *Jagamantha* ~ through out the world; *nindi yundaga* ~ being filled with;

(Appreciation) The choice of Sabari by Rama is viewed in two ways: Firstly, it indicates a preference over all those disciplined Yogis, who forever wish for the vision of Rama. Secondly, it also shows the preference over the many beautiful and possibly younger women.

Para #3: *Kanulàra Sèvinchi* ~ Having served to (her) eye's (heart's) content; *Kammani Phalamula Nosagi* ~ Having offered delicious fruits; *Thanuvu Pulakarimcha* ~ with the body in an 'ecstatic' state; *Pàdayugamulaku Mrokki* ~ Having bowed to His feet; *Inakulapathi Samukhambuna* ~ In the presence of the King of Ina (Surya) kula; *Punaràvrutthi Rahitha Padamunu Pondina* ~ Having obtained the position where there are no further births; *Thyagarajanaturàli Punyambunu* ~ The punyam of this woman, who has been praised by Thyagaraja.

(Appreciation) In this moving passage, the word 'pulakarimcha' deserves elaboration. It generally refers to a physical sensation, often produced by an intense, and brief stimulus. For example, we experience this from a sudden chill or when we see something beautiful, like a sunset. Sanjaya, after narrating Bhagavad Gita to Dhritarashtra, acknowledges such a sensation too.

'Inakulapathi' refers to Ràma. 'Ina' not only means the Sun, but is also the name of a King preceding Ràma. In 'Raghuvamsam', Kàlidàsa gives a complete description of Ràma's dynasty.

In Hindu thought, man's ultimate quest is often said to be the freedom from the cycle of birth and death. 'Punaràvrutthi Rahitha Padamu' refers to such a position, or status. Clearly, Sabari achieved this state through the blessing of Sri Ràma.

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We, from SRUTI, take this opportunity to wish you and your family all the best. May peace be with you.

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