Chapter-1
Indian Classical Music
Karnataka Classical Music

“The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus,
let no such man be trusted”.

‘Merchant of Venice’, William Shakespeare.

Music is a universal art. Classical music finds a vital place in the life of people all over the world. It appeals to one and all, and has no discrimination as to caste or creed.

Music elevates the soul – it is a powerful instrument in moral education. It develops the power of concentration. Plato and Confucius have emphasized the fact that music is essential for monarchs and ministers because of the balanced judgments they were supposed to deliver after deciding various problems and issues in composed minds with great insight.

India is known for its rich cultural heritage. Various art-forms like music, dance, painting, sculpture, architecture and other allied arts have thrived in this country for centuries, and needless to say, have reached high degrees of sophistication. In India as many as sixty four art forms have been identified and nurtured. Indian culture, Indian civilization, Indian music, and Indian languages-have achieved indisputable precedence in the world - our music imparts sophistication to individuals.
Undoubtedly, Indian Music was the first to become widely known by western music lovers. Laurent Aubert, a renowned western musicologist says, ‘The total immersion into the atmosphere of India touched me in my most intimate being to the point that, for years, I was unable to listen to any other music than the one created by the Indian masters. I took great pains to follow their footsteps and to apply scrupulously their teachings…… India offers an almost perfect model of the synthesis between classicism and modernity, between tradition and creation, between strongly established structure and freedom of individual expression; a model valid not only in the field of music, but for life in general. Like many others, I am greatly indebted to India for this’.

We see a magnificent system of music developed in India. The Science of music here dates back to the 4th Century B.C. Classical music here is venerated as symbolic of nādabrāhman. The concept of God as nadabrahma is sacred, and speaks of the unique place given to music in this country. This concept of God is India’s contribution to the world. God is described as the resultant form of music in a Tevaram in the 9th Century itself, as dwelling in raga by Arunagirinathar in his Tiruppugal.

There are several paths to salvation like yoga, penance, knowledge, devotion, etc. But music is the easiest path to propitiate the Almighty, who is described as the personification of nāda. Music has the essence of all the ingredients necessary for moksha - The Yaga, The Yoga, The knowledge, and The Penance.

Music is both art and science. Music brings people together and takes away all the negative qualities in man such as hatred and jealousy - happiness and harmony taking their place.

Organized Indian music owes its origin to the Sāmaveda. Sāmaveda which is believed to have laid the foundation for Indian classical music consists of

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1 ‘History of South Indian Music’ by Prof. Sambamurthy, vol 1, p. no.14.
hymns from the Rigveda, set to musical tunes which would be sung using three to seven musical notes during Vedic yajnas. The date of the oldest text i.e. Rigveda is variously estimated by scholars from 2000 B.C. to 10,000 B.C. The Vedas were musically recited. The Veda has all the seven notes of the raga kharaharapriya in the descending order. The songs of the Rigveda were known as the giti, Gatha and Gayatra. Samaveda is divided into two portions - archika and gāna. The primordial sound ‘om’ gave rise to various notes. The earliest Raga is speculated to be ‘Sama Raga’.

During the late Vedic period 3000-1200 BC, a form of music called Samagana was prevalent which involved chanting of the verses set to musical patterns. Various forms of music like Jatigana were evolved to narrate the epics.

The Yajnavalkya Smriti mentions -

\[
\text{vinavadanatattvajnasrutijativisaradah}
\]
\[
talajnascaprayasenamokshamarganiyacchati
\]

(The one who is well versed in veena, one who has the knowledge of srutis and one who is adept in tala, undoubtedly attains moksha).

The Encyclopaedia Britannica says’, it is probable that the earliest attempts at notation were made by the Hindus and Chinese from whom the principle was transferred to Greece.3

Various instruments were in use in the Vedic times. In Rigveda ‘Vana’ is mentioned. In ancient Sumeria also ‘Bana’ is mentioned.4

The Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Sutras, Pratisakhyas and Shikshas contain various references to music of the ancient times. From these references it is

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2 ‘Indian Music’ by Thakur Jaidev Singh’, page no.5
3 The Encyclopaedia Britannica, page no 21, vol 16.
4 ‘Indian Music’ by Thakur Jaidev Singh’, page no.3.
clear that music had evolved a good deal during this period which may be said to extend from 1000 B.C. to 600 B.C.¹

**Brahmanas:**

The Shatapathabrahmana says that many veenas were played together and the leader of the ensemble of the veenas was called Veenaganagit. It also clearly mentions the ‘uttaramurchana’.²

**Aranyakas:**

The aitreyaranyaka compares the man-made vina to the human body which it calls the divine vina. It gives a description of all the parts of the veena which was still a bow-shaped harp.

**Sutras:**

In Sankhayana Shrauta Sutra (XVII, 1-3) we get a detailed description of the hundred-stringed veena. These sutras also give references of Picchora, which was a wind instrument.

In ‘Latayananshrutasutra (IV,2, 1-10) we get a description of ‘Alabu’ veena, Alabu- meaning gourd.

Pushpa Sutra, which is a pratishakhya of Sāmaveda contains a good deal of information on vedic music.³

The Nandi sutra mentions a number of musical instruments: maddala, Kadava, Jhallari, Hudukka, Kansala, Kahala, Talima, Vamsha, Shankha, Panava, etc.

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² XIII, 4,2; XIII, 4,2,11 and Xiii4,3,14.
**Prātishakhya**:  
Some Prātishakhya also give references of music. The ‘Rikprātishākhya’ mentions the three registers of the voice ‘mandra(produced mainly through the lungs), Madhya(produced through the throat) and Tāra(produced through the head). Flat and sharp notes were recognised by this time. The three tempos vilambita, madhyama and druta are also mentioned in this pratishakhya.

**The Shikshas**:  
The shikshas, like the pratishakhya also dealt with Vedic phonetics and music. The Pratishakhya was concerned mostly with the way in which phonetics was applied to each Shakha (branch) of Veda. Each Veda had its own text and laid down general principles of phonetics and music. Yagyavalkya Shiksha mentions about the emergence of the musical notes – Shadja, Rishabha, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhaivata and Nishada out of the Vedic pitches Udatta, Anudatta and Swarita. The Naradeeyashiksha is a most important text of the Shiksha, composed by Narada. He is known to have descended with a veena from heaven.¹ Like Manduki Shiksha Narada has also assigned the various notes to the pitch of various animals. Narada describes the physiological organs involved in the production of seven notes The three gramas out of which scales are evolved.-the Shadja Grama, Madhyama Grama and Gandhara Grama. The murchanas, the names of which seem to be slightly different from Bharata’s of each grama are also given. Narada has also mentioned seven Grama-Ragas – Shadava, Panchama, Madhyama Grama, ShadjaGrama, Sadharana, Kaishika- Madhyama and Kaishika. Towards the end of the Vedic periodthesolfa syllables - Sa, Ri Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha Ni were definitely evolved.

The Europiansolfasystem - do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, Shi was evolved by Guido

¹Magha in the tenth verse of the first canto of Shishupalavadha.
d’Arezzo only in 10th century A.D.

In the Vedic period we notice the gradual evolution of folk music into formalistic and systematic art music. The Vedic system analyses the entire music into seven categories. These are called archika, Gatika, samika, Swaranțara, Oudava, shādava and Sampūrna. Archika consisted of one note, Gatika- two notes, sāmika- with three notes (many hymns of the Sāmaveda were originally sung in three notes), Swaranțara- four notes, Oudava- five notes Shādava- six notes and sampūrna-seven notes. At first the word Yama was used for a note. Later in the Prātishakhya and Shiksha period the note was called swara.

It is mainly in these ways formalized music was developed out of folk music in the Vedic period.

**Epic Period (about 700 B.C. to about 1560 B.C.):**

References to Indian classical music are made in many ancient texts, including epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata.

The Ramayana of Valmiki is pre-Buddhistic. Music played an important role in the life of the people of Ayodhya, Kishkindha and Lanka. The word atodya which is a blanket term for all kinds of instrumental music occurs in Sundara Kanda, wherein we also find the term Vipanchi Vina (10, 41) which was a veena of nine strings.

There is a reference to the seven jatis in the Bālakānda ¹ and Uttarākānda. Jatis were the matrix of the later ragas.

The words vina and tantric occur at many places. Here too we find references to purchanas.²

In Kishkindha Kanda (30,50) we come across the word venu and vamsha.

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¹ Balakanda, 4,8 and Uttrakanda 94,2.
² Balakanda-4, 10 and Uttarakananda-71,15.
Percussion instruments like *Dundubhi, panava, pataha* are also found in the Ramayana. A study of Ramayana tells us that a whole science of music known as Gandharva had come into existence. Kusha and Lava were popular as musicians. Music played an important part in religious service, in war, in festivals, in courts of kings, in dramas and the daily life of people.

In Mahabharata it is said in Adiparva, ch.70 that Kacha entertained Devayani by singing, dancing and playing the instruments. The word Gandhara occurs in this book in the sense of the science and art of music. In Dronaparva we find references to instruments like *Mrdanga, Jharjhara, Bheri, Panava, gomukha, adambara, shankha* and *Dundubhi*.

In shantiparva there is reference to Veena and Venu (ch.52, 4-5). Arjuna taught Uttara the art of singing, dancing and playing instruments. We also find here the Matsya Raja had built an institution in which girls used to receive instruction during the day.

**Music in the Buddhist and Jain Sources:**

Music was cultivated in the Buddhist and Jain periods also. LalitaVistara which gives an account of the Buddha’s life says that he, as a prince, had received training in playing veena, singing and dance. The jataka tales which describe the past lives of the Buddha contain many references to music. In Dadhivahana Jataka, it is related that a Brahmin named shaka had prescribed a drum to his brother who was living on a hill saying, ‘if you beat on one side of the drum, your enemies would run away. If you beat on the other side, they would become your friends’. It is said in Jataka part II that Guttila (who was Bodhisatva in his next birth), who was the court musician in the court of the king of Kashi defeated Musila in a musical

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1 virataparva chapter 3.
2 Virataparva chapter 25.3.
3 Jataka book II, p no. 70.
soiree in the palace.\textsuperscript{1} From this story it is also clear that Songs then were sung with the accompaniment of Vina, which had seven strings. The Mahajanakajajataka refers to the four great sounds—drum, horn, gong and cymbals.

Playing of instruments was considered a respectable profession during this period. It is recorded that Bodhisatva himself was a professional player of Bheri and Shankha.\textsuperscript{2} Even in processions all kinds of instruments were carried and played in the last chariot.\textsuperscript{3}

We learn from Mahasara and Takkariya Jataka that every king had his court musician. A few other instruments mentioned in the jatakas are Adambara, Anaka, Samatala, Kumbhatana, Shankha, etc.

Buddhist book Avadana Shataka says that there were five hundred musicians in Shravasti alone.

Sthananga Sutra is an important book of this period wherein we find all the seven notes being mentioned. The three gramas and the murchanas are also being discussed.

Other musical instruments mentioned in Jain works are Pirapiriya, dhakka, Bheri, Dundubhi, Muraya and muanga (Mrdanga).

\textbf{Tamil Sources:}

In early Tamil literature we find references to music. The drum has been mentioned with the respect of a deity in the Tamil books Purandnuru and Pattuppattu which were written between A.D.100 to 200. The yala was the most important instrument of the south.\textsuperscript{4} Some varieties of this instrument

\textsuperscript{1}Jatakal, Guttilajajataka, p.no. 172-176.
\textsuperscript{2}Jatakas-first part, p.no.146- bherivadakajataka and ShankhadhwaniJataka.
\textsuperscript{3}Vigrodajajataka .p.VI.
\textsuperscript{4}‘Indian Music’ By Dr.Thakur Jaidev singh, p.no. 21.
had a thousand strings. Shilappadikaram, a drama in Tamil contains a great deal of information of the music of the south. ‘Isa’ the technical term for music is used here. Tivarakam, a Jain lexicon of the 3rd century gives abundant information about Dravidian music.

**Ancient Treatises: (In Different Major Epochs)**

Ancient treatises which were written also describe the connection of the origin of the swaras or notes to the sounds of animals and birds, and man's effort to simulate these sounds, with respect to a natural nāda pervading the universe, through a keen sense of observation and perception.

Nātya Shāstra is the oldest book available on dramaturgy and musical theory. The main portion of the book was written about 200 or 100 B.C. The drama Sūrya Sankalpōdayasays that Bharata became an acrostic word, bha-standing for Bhava (emotion), ra- for raga and ta- meaning tāLa and therefore bharata came to be known as one who combined within himself a deep knowledge of Bhava, Raga and Tala. Six chapters of this book deal mainly with music. Bharata also classifies the musical instruments into four categories. (This has been described in chapter II, which is on musical instruments of Karnataka music. A detailed description of Veenaand the flute and the technique of playing them is given here.)

The next major work on music was Dattilam, an ancient Indian musical text ascribed to the sage (muni) Dattila. This text discusses parent tonal frameworks (grama), the 22 micro-tonal intervals (srutis) placed in one octave-space, the process of sequential re-arrangement of notes (murchana), and the permutations and combinations of note-sequences (tanās).

Dattilam also describes the 18 jatis which are the fundamental melodic structures for the jati-gayan. The jatis have ten basic characteristics, which closely resemble the structuring and elaboration of the contemporary raga in Hindustani music. The names of some jatis like andhri, oudichya may
reflect their regional origins, as do the names of many Hindustani ragas today, e.g. Sorath, Khamaj, Kanada, Multani and Jaunpuri.

Jati-gayan was entirely pre-composed. However, Hindustani music stressed improvisation which completely changed its nature. But the approach and concepts of Dattilam made the transition from sama-music to the contemporary raga-music significant and smooth.

Dattilam also endorses the existence of the 22 Shruts per octave and even goes to suggest that these 22 Shruts are the only ones a human body could make. This view was expressed again by another musicologist of the 13th century AD, Saranga Deva in his famous work Sangeeta Ratnakara. Saranga Deva, among other things, defined almost 264 Ragas, including some Dravidian and North Indian ones. He also described the various kinds of microtones, and also classified them into different categories.

After the SangitaRatnakara of Sarasangadeva (1210-1247), the word “Karnataka” came to represent the South Indian Classical Music as a separate system of music. A clear demarcation between Hindustani music and Karnataka music as two different forms of Indian classical music is seen around the latter half of the 14th century. Classical Indian music flourished in the southern capital cities, particularly in Vijayanagara and Tanjavur.

Between 2nd to 7th AD a form of music called PrabandhSangeet, which was written in Sanskrit, became very popular. This form gave way to a simpler form called Dhruvapad, which used Hindi as the medium.

Of the other important works on Indian music, mention must be made of Brihaddesi 9 AD written by Matanga, SangeetaMakaranda 11th century AD written by Narada (which enumerates 93 Ragas and classifies them into masculine and feminine species), Swaramela-Kalanidhi of Ramamatya 16 AD and Chaturdandiprakashika of Venkatamakhi- 17 AD. It took a long time for music to come to its present day form. In the beginning, music was
devotional in content and was purely used for ritualistic purposes and was restricted to temples.

**Music in the puranic sources:**

A Purana traditionally treats five subjects: the primary creation of the universe, secondary creation after periodic annihilation, the genealogy of gods and saints, grand epochs, and the history of the royal dynasties. Into this core subject a Purana incorporates other religious accretions like customs, ceremonies, sacrifices, festivals, caste duties, donations, construction of temples and idols, and places of pilgrimage.

The puranas too contain information about Indian music. There are eighteen Mahapuranas and eighteen Upa Puranas. Information on music is available mostly in Vāyu PurāNa, Mārkandeya PurāNa, and Vishnu Purana. Harivamsha praises a musical performance called Chalikya, which was a Gandharva type of singing accompanied by a number of musical instruments. Vena, Venu and mrdanga were the instruments accompanying Chalikya music. Krishna is said to be the inventor of this music. He was also the inventor of Hallisaka, group dance which developed into Rāsa.

The Vayu Purana written in about 500A.D. mentions all the seven swaras and three gramas with mūrchanas and the Tānās. It also gives an elaborate description of Varnas and alankaras. In Markandeya Purana also there is a reference to the seven notes, grama ragas, murchanas, seven varieties of vocal music, three varieties of laya, 49 tanas and four varieties of musical instruments. Vishnu Dharmottra among all the puranas contains the most numerous references to music.

**References of music In Kalidasa’s works:**

There are references to music in many of kalidasa’s works. The words
Veena, Sangeeta, gana, gandharva, mridanga and muraja occur in many plays.

In ‘Kumārasambhava’ Kalidasa says that Kinnaras awakened Shiva in the morning by singing Gita MangaLa in Kaishika set to particular murchana.

In ‘Malavikagnimitra’ again, many musical terms are being used. In act ii, “Deva, Sharmishtayah Kritilaya Madhya chatushpada” is mentioned where three words of music, ie. ‘kriti, laya and chatushpada’ are used.

In ‘Vikramorvasheeyam’ Kalidasa mentions in act ii, many ancient musical compositions like Dvipadika, Jambhalika, Khandadhara, Carcari, Bhinnaka, Khandaka, Khuraka, etc. King Udayana was believed to have tamed the elephants with his veena Ghoshavati.

**Kudumiyāmalai inscription:**

The Kudimiyānalai inscriptions in a cave, near Pudukottai (Tamilnadu), has an array of musical diction (notation) of South Indian music in the 7th Century AD. The scripture is carved on a piece of rock on the orders of King MahendraVerma, The King of Pallavas. Of the few inscriptions available on Indian music, this is the major one and it has created a lot of interest to our musicologists. Discovered by Dr. Bhandarkar in 1904, it was found at the cave temple at Melakkovil in Tamilnadu. This inscription placed obliquely in the temple is about thirteen feet tall and sixteen feet wide in size. Though the letters in the inscription belonged to the seventh century, musicologists found it difficult to decide who the script belonged to.

While some were of the opinion that it was the script of the Chalukyas, some others opined that it was that of the Pallavas. But the letters in the inscription were found to be similar to the other scriptures of

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1sarga viii, verse 85.
Mahendra Verma in Tiruchanapalli and South Arkat. What is more, towards the end of the inscription, it is said that the inscription has been carved on the orders of King Maheshwara, who was none other than Mahendra Verma-1. That King Mahendra Verma had mastery over music and other fine arts is evident through the characters in the ‘Matta Vilasa Prahasana’ written by the king himself.

The sentence ‘ettirukkumelirukkumivaiuriya’ in this inscription has been explained differently by wits. For example, ‘what Mahendra Verma played in his seven-stringed veena can also be played on an eight-stringed one’—was one explanation. The other explanation is that the total number of swaras occurring in the inscription is $7 \times 4 \times 16 = 448$, which is divisible both by seven and eight. This perhaps is the implied meaning in the sentence, according to some musicologists.

Another inscription was also found in Tirumáyam near Pudukkotai in Tamilnadu, which is situated about fourteen kilometres to the south. This inscription was discovered by the great scholar Sri T.K. GovindaRao.

Though this inscription was written several years earlier, the place was misused in an irreparable manner by king Pandya, who wanted to use the same place to get a scripture written about the coins that he had released. Of the remains, we can know about some technical terms of music.

The Tirumayam inscription is very much similar to the one at Kudumiyamalai. As the term Parivardini is used in both the inscriptions, and also because Mahendra Verma was well versed in playing the parivardiniveena and as both the inscriptions are in the same script and in the same manner and more notably, as the name Gurusena, which is the other name for Mahendra Verma occurs in both the inscriptions, it was decided that both these inscriptions had been created by King Mahendra Verma. These inscriptions have helped in the system of music notation system to a large extent. The inscription contains quadruple
groupings of musical notes pertaining to the seven ancient grama ragas.1

**Gupta Dynasty:**

The Gupta period is considered as the golden era in the development of Indian music. All the music treatises like Nātya Shāstra and Brihaddeshi were written during this period.

Nātyashāstra elaborately described three kinds of theatre, differing in their size and shape. Music from the stage had to be heard as well as seen; hence the skilful used of stage space was necessary. Bharata's detailed instructions about the kutapa or the orchestra bring out the close relationship between the kind of music performed and the quality of stage space.

Kalidasa, who was in the court of Vikramaditya (380-413 AD), epitomises the artistic accomplishments of the Gupta period. Kalidasa's works mention musical instruments like the Parivadinivina, Vipanchivina, Pushkar, Mridang, Vamshi and Shankha, different types of songs like the Kakaligeet, Streegeet and Apsarogeti, technical terms like Murchana, Swarasaptaka and Tana and qualities of voice like Kinnarkanthi and Valguvagam.

The Gupta king Harshavardhan (606-648 AD), was himself a singer. There are references to music making in his plays, 'Nagananda', 'Ratnavali' and 'Priyadarshika'. A story in the 'Panchatantra' (fifth century), one of the most celebrated compilations of fables ever produced by mankind, also refers to music.

The tradition of Indian art music flourished in four kinds of performing spaces: sacrificial areas, temple precincts, stages and platforms and princely courts. The character of each of these spaces determined the pitch, volume and timbre of music.

The music associated with the sacrificial hall was mainly the mantras,

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1 'Indian music' by Dr. Thakur Jaidevsingh, p.no.35.
which were recited as well as sung. The words, their enunciation and their appropriateness for the ritual were the supreme considerations. Musical instruments were employed, but their role was secondary.

One of the influences on Indian music has perhaps been that of Persian music, which brought in a changed perspective in the style of Northern Indian music. In the 15th century AD, as a result of the patronage given to the classical music by the rulers, the devotional Dhruvapad transformed into the dhrupad form of singing. The Khayal developed as a new form of singing in the 18th century AD.

The Indian classical music, thus, developed from the ritualistic music in association with folk music and other musical expressions of India’s extended neighborhood, developing into its own characteristic art. It is then that the two schools of music resulted, the Hindustani (North Indian music) and the Karnataka (South Indian music).

Two distinct Styles of Indian Classical Music:

During the twelfth and thirteenth Centuries northern India suffered a series of invasions by Muslim rulers from Asia Minor on a crusade to spread the Islamic religion throughout the region. Until this time, the style of Indian music remained more or less the same for the whole of India.

Following the Islamic invasions and the concurrent cultural amalgamation, Indian music developed two distinctive systems: North Indian music (Hindustani music) and South Indian music (Karnataka music).

The influence of Islam together with other cultural, social and political forces produced the unique Hindustani style. (Literally, the music of India - Hindustan is the Hindi word for India; Stan translates as land of the Hindus).

In South India music continued to develop without external influence and
is still known today as Karnataka music. (literally - in Tamil - old or traditional).

In Tamil the word Karnataka means tradition. It also means purity. The term Karnataka is used in the dual sense of old and southern part of the Indian Peninsula. The first work to mention the word ‘Karnataka’ is the Brihaddeshi. The word appears in the form of a raga by name Karnata, a desi raga. (verse- 375). Karnataka music and dance material are being talked about in Sarngdeva’s ‘Sangeeta Ratnakara’. Bharata Vatika’ of Nanyadeva also mentions the word Karnataka. In Bhagavatam too we see the name Karnataka. In Bhoja Champu again, this word is referred to.

**Rational Music:**

The major features of Indian music are rationality and comprehensiveness. We see rationality in the 72 melakarta system, in the 35 suladitalas, in the five varieties of chaputala and the scale system. The rich tradition of South Indian music is one of the world’s gems. The high performance standards and the well organised theoretical foundation put it on par with anything that world has seen, either East or West.

**Dawn of Modern Karnataka Music:**

Karnataka music took its final shape and form from the time of Purandaradasa, who systematized the laws of teaching music and wrote innumerable padas and prabandhas, besides composing svaravalis, gitas, suladis, tayams, devaranamas and alankaras in the saptatalasas preliminary exercises and early lessons which must necessarily be learnt.

Subsequently, Ramamathya, in his work SvaramêLa kalânidhi, condenses the Sangitaratnakara and explains the nature of nineteen melas and their one hundred and sixty-six janyaragas.

It was Venkatamakhi who formulated the scheme of seventy-two melas in
his Chaturandiplakshika. It is, however, not known if he assigned names to the several ragas. Later, Akalanka, in his work Sangītasārasangraham, spoke of a number of ragas and determining their lakshanas.

AriyakudiRamanaujalyengar in his article on Concert Tradition says, ‘The great work of Govindacharya, ‘Sangrahachoodamani’, is an authoritative and contribution, containing lakshanagitas for 366 rāgas (including the 72 melas), and this became the classic authority for the great vidwans like my Guru Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar’.

Several changes in theory and practice have surely taken place from Vedic times to the present day. Historical records allow us to trace the interesting pattern of evolutionary changes in music.

**Music and Divinity:**

**Divine Origins:**

It is the belief in Indian culture, that all art forms have a divine origin. Karnataka music is also believed to have originated from the Gods. In fact, it has been told in Hindu scriptures that the easiest and best way to attain moksha is to sing the glory of the Divine power. In Hindu scriptures, music and God have always been depicted together. Many deities have their own musical instruments and are all portrayed as lovers of music.

Lord Krishna, the first of flautists, indicates his musical inclinations by the fact that he is the Sāma Veda among the Vedas. While Lord Siva is the embodiment of Nāda (cosmic music) and Tāndava (cosmic dance), Goddess Parvathi is seen as the embodiment of Lāsya, the feminine quality. Goddess Saraswati, the source of wisdom is always associated with the Veena (known as Vipanchi, or veena).
Goddess Lakshmi, the source of wealth revels in music while Lord Vishnu, her consort, plays on the percussion. Among the saints as well, Narada and tumburu are found as Vainika-Gayaka (experts in music and Veena). Nandi, the holy bull of Siva, is the master of Laya. Demi-Gods like Yakshas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras are all proficient in music and musical instruments.

In Hindu scriptures, music is known as GandharvaVidya. Hanuman was proficient in the instrument Hanumadveena and this is the first form of the present day Chitraveena.

**Mythological Aspects of Music:**

In India, mythology has a very important place and its influence on the art and culture of the country is phenomenal, Karnataka music being no exception. Owing to its spiritual and devotional aspects, Karnataka music is associated with Hinduism, the dominant religion of India. The origin of this art has been attributed to the Gods and Goddesses.

Apart from these sources, many saints and scholars believe that music is the greatest form of tapasya and the easiest way to reach godhead or to attain salvation. It is believed that music is one of the most pious, sacred and noble paths that lead an individual in due course of his life's journey in search of truth, the only truth i.e. Moksha or Liberation which can be achieved only through the realization of God.

Spirituality has always been the prominent content of Karnataka music. The beautiful blending of the beauty and devotional element has made it extraordinary and divine. The basic idea behind Indian music compositions
has been to see and seek the ultimate Brahman or God.

There is another concept about the evolution of music that the universe is created by the Omkara. So the Omkara is the personification of Parabrahma. It is said that music was evolved by the three syllables in the omkara- ‘a’ kara, ‘u’kara and ‘ma’kara. ‘a’kara is the personification of Brahma, ‘u’kara is the personification of Vishnu and ‘ma’kara is the personification of Rudra.

Most of the musical compositions are either philosophical in content or describe the various deities or incidents from Hindu mythology. It is believed that music itself is divine and that the perfect synchronisation of the performer with the musical sound, nada, is the real divine bliss. This practice is called nadopasana.1 Many musicians and music lovers visualise divine forms in the ragas or the melodic entities of Karnataka music.

**Evolution of Musical Forms:**

TallapakkamAnnamacharya (1425 - 1503 AD), composed in a new form called Kriti, having three sections, namely the Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. This pattern became widely accepted and was popularised by later composers, in particular, the Trinity. This stands out as an outstanding contribution of Annamacharya to the practical side of our music. He is credited to have composed about thirty two thousand compositions of which around twelve thousand have been traced and some of these have been still preserved in copper plates. The Kritis were not as complicated as the earlier Prabandha forms.

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1Sri Tyagaraja’s Kriti ‘Nadopasana’ in raga Begade.
Purandaradasa (1484 - 1564 AD) is known as the Sangeeta Pitāmaha. A prolific composer, he laid the foundation for the systematic learning of the system and he is credited to have formulated the swara exercises for practice, apart from composing simple songs, Gitams, and a number of compositions (Kritis) with high philosophical import.

In short, during the medieval period, one can say that Karnataka music gradually attained its individuality built over a historically strong foundation. In particular, after the 13th century, no major treatise is seen from the North. Tanjavur and Vijayanagara emerged as the major seats of Karnataka music, with a number of classic monumental works being produced in both the theoretical and practical aspects of music.

**MODERN PERIOD:**

(17th century to present day- From the Period of Puarandaradasa to the Present Period):

The 17th century can be considered as a golden age of Karnataka music. It marks several important milestones of Karnataka music in diversified angles, thus, enriching this traditional art form, while preserving the past glories. Some of the most important developments in both Lakshana (theoretical) and Lakshya (practical) aspects took place during this period.

**Theoretical aspects**

The well-structured 72 Melakarta scheme was formulated by Venkatamakhi in his treatise Chaturdandi Prakasika in 1660 AD. This scheme is the proud heritage of our music, and is not simply of academic interest, but also has immense practical value to all musicians, musicologists and students. Other important treatises on music written during this period are the Sangeeta Saramrita of Tulaja (1729 - 1735 AD), Sangeeta Sudha of Govinda Dikshita and the Sangraha Choodamani of Govinda (1750 A.D).

By the end of the 19th century, notational schemes were developed, for
written representation of musical compositions. These were published in works like Subbarama Dikshitar’s Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradarsini in Telugu and Manikka Mudaliar’s Tamil work, Sangeeta Chandrikai. A. M Chinnasami Mudaliar published south Indian music compositions written in western staff notation. These early pioneers in recent times have paved the way for a research-oriented understanding of this practical art form.

While the theoretical works were trying to keep pace with the practical music, the practical music itself was evolving continuously and a number of luminaries have made a tremendous impact on refinement of this art form, to keep it fresh and alive.

The Age of Vaggeyakaras:

In the 18th century, within a short period from 1763 - 1775 AD, were born the three great composers of Karnataka music, who were later to be celebrated as the Musical Trinity (Trimurti) – Shyama Sastri (1762 - 1827) Tyagaraja (1767-1847) and Muthuswami Dikshitar (1776-1835). All of them combined their immense knowledge, deep spirituality and profound traditional musicianship with an amazing sense of creativity and innovative spirit.

This has made their contribution to Karnataka music invaluable. The art of musical composition was elevated to great heights at their hands. It can confidently be asserted that all later composers have tried to live up to the standards set by these three star composers.

Other great composers who have contributed to the vast repertoire of Karnataka music compositions include Swati Tirunal (1813-1847), Vina Kuppayyar, Subbaraya Sastri, Gopalakrishna Bharati, Ghanam Krishna Iyer, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Koteeswaralyer, Muthaiah Bhagavatar, Mysore Vasudevachar and Papanasam Sivan.
Musical concepts:

The 72 Melakarta scheme was responsible for the transformation in the Raga system of Karnataka music. Several new Ragas came into existence and were popularised by means of compositions tuned by the Trinity of composers along with others who followed the 72 Melakarta scheme. Many different kinds of musical compositions developed, having different structural arrangements (musical forms). These include the varnam, kriti, padam, javali, tillana, swarajati and other varieties. These forms have continued to remain popular in the 20th century.

Till the end of the 19th century, the patronage of Karnataka music and musicians was mostly limited to the major temples and royal courts, as also a few rich landowners, who arranged concerts for various events. In the 20th century, the patronage has taken a different shape, with the advent of a number of organisations (Sabhas) and corporate sponsors who have brought a more professional outlook to this traditional art-form. As a result, Karnataka music is now heard in all major Indian cities, as also in major centres in Asia, Europe and America.

The Present Day Format:

It was in the 20th century that today's typical concert structure was put in place by the vocalist Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar. The opening piece a varnam, is a warm-up for the musicians. Devotion and a request for a blessing follow, then a series of interchanges between ragas (unmetered melody) and thalas. This is intermixed with hymns called kritis. The pallavi or theme from the raga then follows. Karnataka pieces also have notated lyrical poems that are reproduced as such, possibly with embellishments and treatments according to the performer's ideology. Primary themes include worship, descriptions of temples, philosophy and nayaka-nayika themes.
Music Education In Modern Times:

The learning and teaching processes have also adopted themselves to the changes in the living style, over the years. The traditional Gurukula system has given way to an institutional system of training in the 20th century. Several good musicians have taken to teaching as their profession. Modern educational tools have been pressed into service, with the growth of recording technology. From analogue tape recorders to state of the art computers and internet connections are being put to use in imparting musical education worldwide.

The written musical notation system has undergone several changes over the years and has been used as a reference material for learning. Research oriented study and documentation of musical forms have also increased over the years. A number of books in different languages, by musicians and musicologists, have also been useful to understand the different concepts of this system.

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<td>5th century AD</td>
<td>• Brihaddesi • Matanga • Early compilation of Ragas, then known as Jaatis</td>
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<td>7th century AD</td>
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<td>7th - 9th century AD</td>
<td>• Tevaram • Tirumurai • Divyaprabandha • Appar • Sundaramurti • Tirugnanasambandar • Manikkavacakar • Other Nayanmars&amp;Azhwars • Sacred Tamil music forms • Pann concept</td>
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<td>1210 - 1247 AD</td>
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<td>• Various srutis identified</td>
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<td>SangeetaRatanakaara, Sarangadeva</td>
<td>• Desi system of music was explained in detail.</td>
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<td>• The 22-sruti concept was born.</td>
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<td>• Distinction between Marga and Desi given.</td>
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<td>Raga Tarangini, LochanaKavi</td>
<td>• Gradual emergence of Tanjavur and Vijayanagar as seats of music.</td>
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| 15th century AD | • Sangeeta Sara  
• Vidyaranya (1320 - 1380 AD) | the concept of Raga alapana.                                                  |
|            | • Tiruppugazh  
• Arunagirinathar  
• Purandaradasa (1484 - 1564)  
• Annamacharya (1424 - 1503)  
• Kanakadasa | - Introduction and structuring of basic music lessons.  
- Evolution of kriti, pada formats  
- Growth of Namasankeertana and BhajanaPaddhati (group rendition of devotional music). |
| 1550 AD    | • Swaramela Kalanidhi | - Explanation of the word Mela, Vina techniques and other musical concepts. |
|            | • Ramamatya | |
| 1609 AD    | • Raga Vibodha | • Somanatha |
| 1660 AD    | • SangeetaParijata | • Ahobala |
| 17th century AD (approximately) | • ChaturdandiPrakashika | • Venkatamakhi | • Evolution of modern music theory.  
• Development of 72-mela system. |
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<td>• AnupaSangeetaVilasa</td>
<td>• BhavabhattaShahoji, Maharaja of Tanjavur (1684 - 1710)</td>
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| 17th-18th century AD          | • SangrahaChoodamani   | • Govindacharya | • Development of musical forms like Varnams.  
• Musical treatise with the 72-melakarta scheme along with names written. |
| 18th century AD               | • Trinity of Carnatic music - Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and SyamaSastri  
• Other Tamil composers like Gopalakrishna | • Regarded as the Golden era of Karnataka music. |
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<th>19th century AD</th>
<th>Composers like Subbaraya Sastri, Swati Tirunal, Tachi Singaracharlu, MahaVaidyatha Iyer, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Vina Seshanna and Subbarama Dikshitar</th>
<th>Karnataka music became richer with more compositions.</th>
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<td>1895 - 1950 AD</td>
<td><strong>Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradarsini</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Muthuswami Dikshitar's compositions with notations published through the Sampradaya-pradarsini.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Concepts like Gamakas, etc explained in the same.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Emergence of Sabhas.</strong></td>
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</table>
| 20th century AD | • Golden era for Karnataka music concert scene.  
|                | • Emergence of institutional education for music.  
|                | • Development of mass media like radio and recording companies.  
|                | • Influx of patriotic songs in the wake of the Indian freedom movement.  
|                | • Karnataka music came to be adopted in film music.  
|                | • Technological developments as a result of the electronic and computer age.  
|                | • Adoption of western
instruments like Guitar, Mandolin, Keyboard etc in the concert scene.

- Arrival of TV, cassettes, CDs, CD-ROMs, VCDs etc.
- Growth and globalisation of professional music.

**List of the ‘firsts’ and the ‘only-s’ in Indian music**

i. The system of 72 melas - The only system of Mela in the world.

ii. The 35 suladitalas and varieties of chapu - the only system of tala (rhythm pattern) in the world.

iii. India is the first country in the history of world music to evolve a system of solmization.

iv. India’s Solfa system is the oldest.

v. The youngest composer in the history of world music is Tirujnasambandar (one of the authors of the Tevaram) who composed and sang at the age of three.

vi. The ‘Kudumiyalamalai and the Tirumayam inscriptions belonging to the 7th century A.D. are the oldest inscriptions found about classical notation.

vii. The musical stone pillars, figures in dance pose and the numerous paintings and sculptures depicting music ensembles.
viii. The sculptures of violin and dance in Chidambaram, Tirumakudalu and Vijayavada and Srirangalpatna are found to be the earliest in the origin of violin.

ix. Indian music literature dates back to Pre-Christian era.

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