

Raga of the Month- July, 2017

Vachaspati

Raga Vachaspati is a Carnatic Sampoorna MelaRaga derived from Melakarta No.64 Vachaspati. Its scale is S R G m P D n, that is, R G P D are Shuddha (Natural) swaras, m is Teevra (Sharp) and n is Komal (Flat). When we compare the scale of Raga Vachaspati with that of Raga Yaman, we find that there is a difference only in Nishad. In Yaman it is shuddha, whereas in Vachaspati it is komal. The scale of Raga Vachaspati can also be looked upon as that of Raga Khamaj with shuddha Madhyam replaced by teevra Madhyam.

It is seen that adaptation of Raga Vachaspati in Hindustani classical Music is still in evolution phase and Senior Musicians have been experimenting with its melody structure when presenting the Raga; for example;

Pandit RaviShankar- Sampoorna- Sampoorna Aroha and Avaroha is favoured; hence, one finds prominence of Yama in Poorvanga and influence of Gavati or Kalavati in Uttaranga;

Pandit Shivkumar Sharma prefers the pattern SGmPDnS'' and S''nDPmGRS or S''nDPGRS for Ascent and Descent respectively; whereas;

Pandit Jagdish Prasad adapts SGmPnS'' and S'' nDPmGRS in Aroha and Avaroha;

Some Instrumentalists, leaning towards Raga Saraswati, prefer SRmPnS'' and S''nDPMRS, omitting Gandhar; and,

Ustad Amir Khan has composed a new Raga (untitled though) on the platform of Raga Vachaspati with stress on SGmPnS'' and omitting Dhaivat altogether with only minimal use of Rishabh in Avaroha.

It is interesting at this stage, to note that Ustad Vilayat Khan, coined a different name for his interpretation of Raga Vachaspati, ChandniKalyan. Prefix Chandni to Kalyan stresses presence of Komal Nishad as in ChandniKedar with strong influence of Yaman in Poorvanga.

Please listen to excerpts of Raga Vachaspati presented by Ustad Sabri Khan on Sarangi; and, sung by Ms. Surashree Ulhas Joshi, a distinguished disciple of Late Vidushi Veena Sahasrabuddhe.

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