

Raga of the Month- February, 2012-

Ahiri.

There are many Ragas in Hindustani Music starting with the prefix Ahir- such as, AhirBhairav, AhirLalat, AhiriBhatiyar, Ahiri, AhiriTodi, AhiriKalingada, Ahiravati, Ahireshwari. The word Ahir refers to a caste- synonymous with Yadavas- a cattle raising clan, which perhaps shows linkage of the Raga to folk-music. In practice, however, except AhirBhairav in Ahir group, no other Raga has been well documented and there is a lot of divergence in melodic structures of recordings that are available. In Carnatic music, Raga Ahiri is listed under 4 Melkertas- Hanumatodi, Vakulabharanam, Suryakanta and Natabhairavi.

The scale of Raga Ahiri is S,r,g,M,P,D,n, and it belongs to Melakarta Natakapriya. A cursory glance at the scale reveals that there are many possibilities in developing the structure of the Raga. Some are listed below for example: {Srg, rgr-S - Todi anga (Bilaskhani Todi)} ; {MPDn r''S''- AhirBhairav}; {gMDnS''- Bageshri}; {MPDnS'' and halt on P- Kafi}; {SrgMgr-S – Bhairavi}; Of these and many other possible combinations, in Raga Ahiri, importance is given to BilaskhaniTodi and Bhairavi in Poorvanga and Bageshri in Uttaranga, although shades of other Ragas mentioned above also appear in Alaps. Raga Ahiri Todi comes very close to the structure of Raga Ahiri.

Other scale-congruent Ragas are AhiriTodi, AmiriTodi, A type of Hussaini Todi, JayavantiTodi, Prabhatেশwari, Rasavali and Sharada. The salient phrases of the scale congruent Ragas is given below from academic angle.

AhiriTodi: Srg, rgrs, rgMPM, MDnS'';

AmiriTodi- grgP, M, grgrS;

HussainiTodi- Type I- S'' nP, DMD, grg, rS;

JayavantiTodi : SrMP, DNDS'';

Prabhatেশwari: SgMDnS''/ S'' nDM, MPDMg, rgrS;

Rasavali: SrgMDnS'';

Sharada: rgMgrgrS, 'n'D'n S, SM, PDnDPMg, rgMgrgrS 'n'D, 'n'D'nS;

{Ref: RagaNidhi-B. Subbarao-Vol.I; Raga Darshana-Pt. Manikbuwa Thakurdas-Vol.3; Abhinav Geetanjali- Pt. Ramashreya Jha- Vol 4; Blog. Deepak Raja- December 2008, Raga Pravaham-Dr. M.N.Dhandapani and Smt. D.Pattamal}

Presented here is an excerpt of the Raga Ahiri played on Sitar by Pandit Nikhil Banerjee.

Listen

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