

Path to Dharma

தர்ம நெறி (Dharma Neri)

59



Sri Sankar Publications

Kshethra Vinayaka Temple, Sri Munneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka.

சேஷத்திர (வயல்) விநாயக ஆலயம், ஸ்ரீ முன்னேஸ்வரம், சிலாபம், ஸ்ரீ லங்கா.

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November

2012

நவம்பர் (ஐப்பசி /கார்திகை)



Editorial

'Path to Dharma' the monthly magazine, published by Kshethra Vinayaka Temple, Sri Munneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka, is presenting the 59th issue this month. The main target of this magazine is to communicate the perceptions linked to Hinduism and its ceremonial rituals, customs and dharma, to the anxious readers.

The elucidation and investigation from the readers are appreciated.

B.Sivaramakrishna Sarma,

Kshethra Vinayaka Temple,

Sri Munneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka., November, 2012

Opinion

Dear B.S.Sarma,

I read the articles in the 'Path to Dharma' October issue and it looked nice. Try to check for occasional spelling errors (e.g. 'Quatations' on page 3) as it would dilute the contents. As I mentioned earlier, try to make it a bit modern to attract the reader's interest. If it is very academic, it repels them away from it. It triggers my thoughts on Sri Lankan Tamil writers ... (I do not mean it is you). In my humble opinion, the writings of most of the Tamil writers in Sri Lanka tend to make their articles like a documentary for a curriculum and never think of the audience. First and foremost, they want to mention their personal achievements in the article and irritate the reader. Also, they expect that their every single article shall be archived, documented and referred as if they are epics. I have forward your article to my friends.

Regards,

Ananthan, G

04th October, 2012

Dear Sarma,

I thank you for the 2012 Oct. issue of 'Path to Dharma' (Dharma Neri). It contains valuable information about the vahanas of Hindu Deities with the unique characteristics of each vahana. The qualities of Tulsi and Bilwa have also been usefully illustrated. All the articles are in excellent qualities. With regards,

V.Seshadri, Chennai-90, S.India

06th Oct.2012

Dear B.S Sarma,

Went through the October, 2012 issue of 'Path to Dharma' magazine. It contains valuable data regarding the vahanas of Hindu Deities seen in the temples, with the exceptional distinctiveness of each vahana in brief with plenty of illustrations. Please keep up the scholarly standard of the matters discussed as we always take the subject matter discussed as guidance whenever we refer to. With best wishes.

K.Venkatraman, France.

23rd October, 2012

Dear Sarma,

The monthly magazine 'Path to Dharma' October 15, 2012 is an excellent publication, where the explanation on 'vahanas' are very useful. The account on 'Thulasi' (Ocimum) and the explanation for 'Eka Bilva sloka' are very exceptional.

With best wishes,

M.Jeyarama Sarma, 18, Glenaire Crecent, Creanbourne West, Vict-3977, Australia 15th Oct.2012

1. Give a brief account about Chariots (Ratha, holy car) in Hindu temples?

During Hindu temple festivals the images of gods are taken in processions through the streets on palanquins or on the wooden sculptures of the animal vehicles (*vahanas*) specific to each deity. On festival days bronze (Panchaloka) processional images of the deity are placed on decorated wooden chariots (*rathas*); this is a model of such a chariot. The image is placed on the throne and, accompanied by priests and musicians; the *ratha* is then pulled around the streets by a large number of devotees.

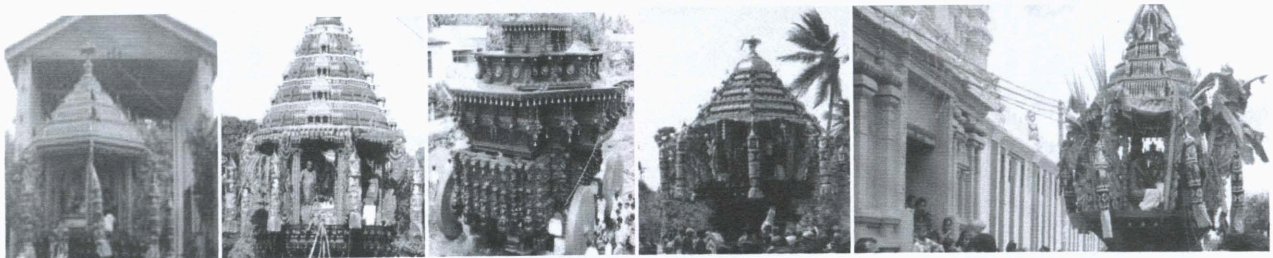
Wooden panels carved with images of deities cover the wheeled base with a pair of rearing horses appearing to drag the chariot forward. The canopy over the top is an appliqué textile. Guardian figures (*dvarapalas*) are painted on the sides.

Chariots (holy car) are significant religious objects of Hindu temples, where most of the gods portrayed to ride, in their pantheon.

The term 'Ratha' means a chariot or holy car made of wood with wheels attached at the base for free movement of the entire structure. The pedestal portion of a Ratha is a well-built wooden platform with attractive wooden carvings; 'peeta' (the seat) is fixed on to this platform, at the midpoint. The idol of the god is placed on this 'peeta' (the seat) during Rathotsava festivals.

The Ratha may be driven or moved forward direction, manually by pulling with ropes by the devotees, pulled by horses or by elephants.

Rathas are used in Hindu temples during the Rathotsava (Car festival). During the Rathotsava festival, the temple deities are placed on the main pedestal of the ratha and driven through the streets, accompanied by the chanting of mantras, hymns, shlokas bhajans playing music, performing dances.



Rathotsava (Rath yatra) or Car festival, using Temple cars, is an annual fascinating celebration which takes place almost in all the large temples. The holy chariots (the Rathas) are usually drawn by the devotees along the pathways. Normally two Lengthy ropes are tied to one end of the car or holy chariot and the other ends are hand held and pulled by large number of devotees. The Rathas are in general decorated with colorful flags images of gods, goddesses, and various religious symbols.

Nadaswaram, Melam (drum), different types of drums, saxophones, harmoniums, tablas, shahnayees, taalas, mridangams, dholkis, nagaras are some of the musical instruments used during the Rathotsava (Rath yatra) festival during the procession.

On the day of the Rathotsava, after the puja ceremonies are completed in the 'vasantha mandapa', the statue of God is brought in a Palanquin to the Ratha by the devotees with the guidance of the vedika-brahmins, who performs the Pooja at the 'Vasantha mandapa'.

Pooja are performed to the statue in the Ratha, after the idol is placed on the pedestal at the appropriate occasion of time (Suba muhurtha).

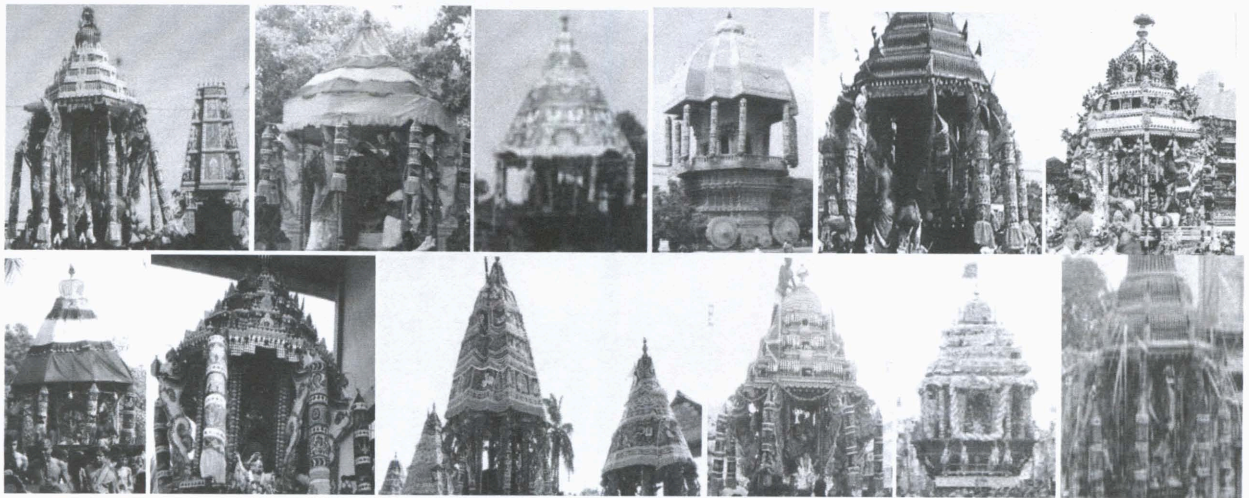
Details of different types of chariots are clearly mentioned in the Rig-Veda, confirming the presence of Chariots in India in the 2nd millennium BC.

Among the group of Rig-Vedic deities, primarily Ushas (the dawn) rides in a chariot, as well as Agni in his responsibility as a messenger between gods and men rides in his chariot.

The Rig-Vedic chariots are described as prepared out of Salmali (Rig-Veda 10.85.20), Khadira and Simsapa (Rig-Veda 3.53.19).an ancient 'Silpasasthra' script mentions that the following wood, Salmali, Khadira, Naval, Sara, Sarala, Mahir, Arjuumadhukam, Tamarind, Barpura, Viyagree, Ksheerini,Grusara, Kruthamala,Vanni and Simsapa.

Shulba Suthras describes the measurements for the construction of different types of chariots. The number of wheels of chariots varies according to the category. Rig Veda refers the chariot by the term 'Anas' (often translated as "cart").

The most important components of a Ratha are the wheels. Kukshi, Aksham, Sihai, Dhantham, Chithram, Keelam are the other prominent components parts of a Ratha or Chariots (holy car). According to the structure of the chariots (holy car).The types of chariotst may be of the following seven categories namely, Napaswan bhadhrakam, Prapanchana bhadhrakam,Vithana bhadhrakam, Bavana bhadhrakam, Preshatha bhadhrakam, Chandra bhadhrakam, Anila bhadhrakam.

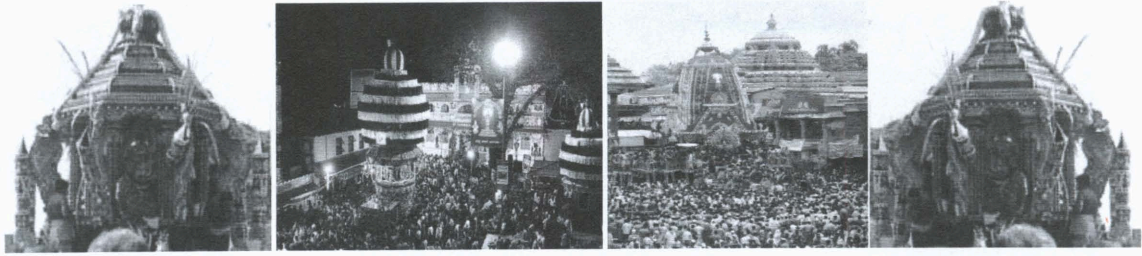


In Rig-Veda 6.61.13, the Sarasvathi river is described as being big like a chariot of the Rig-Vedic chariot.

It has been suggested that the drawings record a story, dating to the early centuries BC, from a center in the area of the Ganges–Yamuna plain into the territory of still Neolithic hunting tribes.

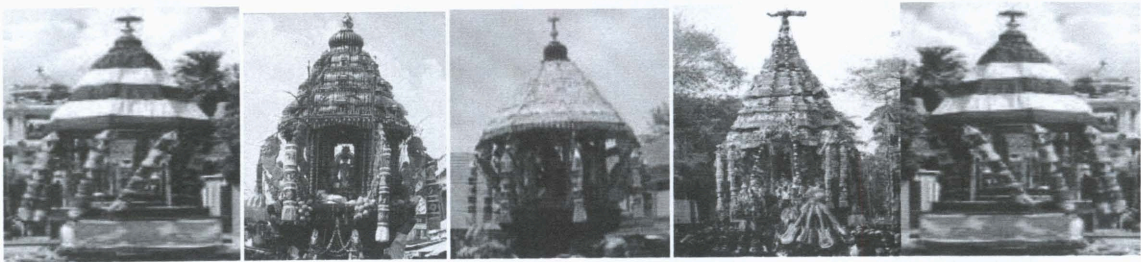
The very realistic chariots carved into the Sanchi stupas are dated to roughly the 1st century. The earliest chariot remains that have been found in India (at Atranjikhera) has been dated to between 350 and 50 BCE.

Indus valley sites have offered several instances of evidence of spoked wheels. Harappan Civilization offered evidences the existence and use of spoked wheel chariots.



In the Rig Veda Mandala 10/Hymn 85, the sun god's bride seated on a chariot pulled by two steeds is mentioned. The relevant verses (translated from Sanskrit by Ralph Griffith) are as follows:

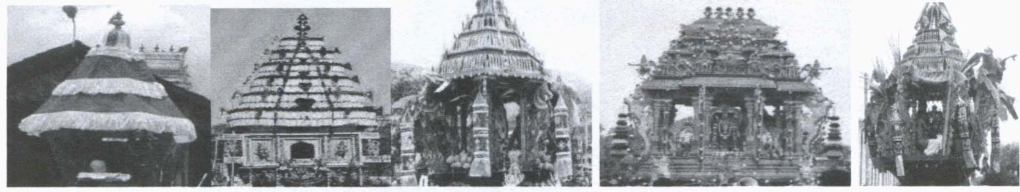
- ❖ Her spirit was the bridal car; the covering thereof was heaven: Bright were both Steeds that drew it when Surya approached her husband's, home.
- ❖ Thy Steeds were steady, kept in place by holy verse and Sama-hymn: All cars were thy two chariot wheels: thy path was tremulous in the sky,
- ❖ Clean, as thou wentest, were thy wheels wind, was the axle fastened there. Surya, proceeding to his Lord, mounted a spirit-fashioned car.



Ratha Saptami marks the 7th day following the northerly movement of the Sun (Uttarayana) of vernal equinox starting from Capricorn (*Makara*). It is symbolically represented in the form of the Sun God, Surya turning his Ratha (Chariot) drawn by seven horses, with Aruna as the charioteer, towards the northern hemisphere, in a north-easterly direction. The symbolic significance of the ratha and the seven horses reigned to it is that it represents the seven colours (Violet, Indigo, Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange, Red) of the rainbow.

The seven horses are also believed to represent the seven days of a week starting with Sunday, the day of Sun god Surya. The chariot has 12 wheels, which represents the 12 signs (each of 30 degrees) of the Zodiac (360 degrees) and constituting a full year, named Samvatsara. The Sun's own house is Leo (Simha) and he moves from one house to the next every month and the total cycle takes 365 days to complete. It is said that the Ratha Saptami festival seeks the benevolent cosmic spread of energy and light from the Sun God.

Thiruvarur, Srivilliputhur, Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu and Puri, in Orissa, host some of the largest annual temple car festivals.



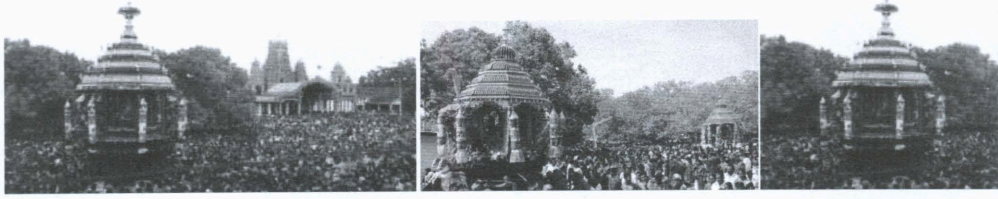
One of the ancient festivals that is mentioned in the devotional hymns of saints Tirugnanasambandar and Sundarar and many Tamil literature, usually held during the summer period between March and April months of every year, lasts more than 25 days.

This great chariot rathas of Thiruvarur in Tamil nadu is said to be the biggest one of its type in size and height. It is 96 feet (29 m) tall and weighs more than 300 tons. Tiruvannamalai, Annamalaiyar Temple and Chidambaram Natarajar Temple possess huge wooden chariots for procession. Udupi Lord Krishna temple possesses five rathas (chariots), namely *Brahma ratha* (biggest), *Madya ratha* (medium), *kinyo* (small), and silver and gold rathas.

List of places having large rathas (chariots) temple cars

1. Thiruvarur, Thiyagaraja swamy temple (Largest Temple car in Tamil Nadu)
2. Sri Villiputtur, Sri Andal Temple (2nd largest Temple car in Tamil Nadu)
3. Tirunelveli, Sri Nellaiappar Temple (3rd largest Temple car in Tamil Nadu)
4. Sri Vaikuntam, Sri Srivaikuntanatha Permul Temple (4th largest Temple car in Tamil Nadu)
5. Madurai Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple and other temples
6. Tiruchirapalli , Ranganathar Temple and other temples
7. Kumbakonam, Sri Saarangapani Temple and other temples
8. Gobichettipalayam, Sri Kondathukalaimman Temple, Sri Balamurugan Temple etc.
9. Avinashi ,Sri Avanashiappar Temple
10. Erode , Chennimalai, Sivagiri, Sivanmalai temples
11. Tiruchengode, Sri Arthanareeswarar Temple
12. Cherai, Ernakulam temple
13. Salem, Elampillai, Aranagalur, Rasipuram temples
14. Kadayanallur temple
15. Kanchipuram temple
16. Thirukazhukundram temple
17. Kapaleeshwarar temple, Mylapore, Chennai
18. Karamadai temple, Coimbatore
19. Palani temple - Golden car
20. Thirthahalli temple
21. Tiruvallur temple
22. Tiruvidaimarudur temple
23. Virudhunagar temple
24. Yanam temple
25. Kualalumpur Malaysia -(Seri Maha Mariamman Temple Devasthanam)
26. Teluk Intan,Perak (Sri Nattukottai Chettiar Thandayuthapani Temple)
27. Hamm, Germany: Sri-Kamadchi-Ampal-Temple
28. Palakkad - Many temples in settlements of Palakkad have temple cars
29. Hampi, Karnataka Stone Chariot built by Vijayanagara Kings
30. Suratkal, Karnataka
31. Bantwal, Karnataka
32. Mangalore, Karnataka
33. Udupi, Karnataka
34. Puri, Orissa

35. Bhubaneswar, Orissa
 36. Koduru, Anantapur(Dt) Andhra Pradesh



List of temples possessing Golden rathas (chariots) cars

1. Sri Arulmigu Manakula Vinayagar, Pondicherry
2. Sri Krishna matha, Udupi
3. Arulmigu Maruntheeswar, Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai
4. Arulmigu Devi Karumariamman, Thiruverkadu, Chennai
5. Arulmigu Vadapalani Andavar, Vadapalani, Chennai
6. Arulmigu Kamatchiamman, Mangadu, Chennai
7. Arulmigu Kanthaswamy, Parktown, Chennai
8. Arulmigu Mundakakanniamman, Mylapore, Chennai
9. Arulmigu Kapaleeswarar, Mylapore, Chennai
10. Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy, Maruthamalai, Coimbatore
11. Arulmigu Eachanari Vinayagar, Coimbatore
12. Arulmigu Thandumariamman, Coimbatore
13. Arulmigu MeenakshiSundareswarar, Madurai
14. Arulmigu Jambukeswarar, Thiruvanaikkaval, Trichy
15. Arulmigu Nellaiappar Temple, Tirunelveli
16. Arulmigu Ramanathaswamy, Rameswaram
17. Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy, Thiruchendur
18. Arulmigu Kamatchiamman, Kanchipuram
19. Arulmigu Dandayuthapaniswamy, Palani
20. Arulmigu Swaminathaswamy, Swamimalai
21. Arulmigu Subramanyaswamy, Thiruththani
22. Arulmigu Anjaneyaswamy, Namakkal
23. Arulmigu Pachaimalai Murugan, Gobichettipalayam
24. Arulmigu Pariyur Kondathu Kalamman, Gobichettipalayam
25. Arulmigu Mariamman, Bannari, Erode
26. Arulmigu Velayuthaswamy, Thindalmalai, Erode
27. Arulmigu Arthanareeswarar, Thiruchengode, Erode
28. Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy, Sivanmalai, Erode
29. Arulmigu Kottaimariamman, Dindigul
30. Arulmigu Arunachaleswarar, Thiruvannamalai
31. Arulmigu Vaidhyathanaswamy, Vaitheeswaran Kovil
32. Arulmigu Mahalinga Swamy Temple, Thiruvidaimarutur
33. Arulmigu SankaraNarayanaswamy, Sankarankovil
34. Arulmigu Vanamamalai Perumal, Nanguneri
35. Arulmigu Balamurugan, Raththinagiri
36. Arulmigu Mariamman, Samayapuram
37. Arulmigu Masaniamman, Anamalai
38. Arulmigu Mathurakaliyamman, Siruvachchur
39. Sri Kodhanda Ramudu, Koduru, Anantapur

2. What is the significance of Turmeric in Hinduism?

Turmeric (*Curcuma domestica*, syn: *Curcuma long*) is an important plant in Hindu ceremonies. Turmeric is symbolic to the aspects of fertility and prosperity in Hindu faith which is believed to bring good luck. Turmeric powder is sprinkled on sacred idols and images. Yellow colour and orange colour are both very special with regards to Hinduism, yellow being associated with Vishnu, which is the colour of the space between chastity and sensuality. Orange signifies sacrifice and renunciation and courage.

According to Hindu beliefs the 'chakras' are mystical centres of orientation. Orange represents the sacral chakra and yellow represents the solar plexus chakra. This yogic concept is of the inner cosmology of a being discovered through meditative practice. The use of turmeric is prohibited in a house of mourning.

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) is a rhizomatous herbaceous perennial plant of the family, Zingiberaceae. Turmeric grows wild in the forests of South and Southeast Asia. The rhizomes of turmeric plants are collected and some of those rhizomes planted in the following season. In medieval Europe, turmeric became known as Indian saffron since it was widely used as an alternative to the far more expensive saffron spice. It is one of the key ingredients for many Indian, Persian and Thai dishes such as in curry and many more.

Turmeric has been used in India for over 2500 years and is a major part of the Ayurvedic medicine. It was first used as a dye and then later for its medicinal properties. Turmeric is currently being investigated for possible benefits in Alzheimer's disease, cancer, arthritis, and other clinical disorders.



Turmeric rhizome

Turmeric powder

Turmeric plant (underground stem)

Some research shows compounds in turmeric to have anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties. Investigations have shown that tetrahydrocurcuminoids (THC) from turmeric are colorless compounds that might have antioxidant and skin-lightening properties, and might be used to treat skin inflammations, making these compounds useful in cosmetics formulations.

Turmeric contains up to 5% essential oils and up to 5% curcumin, a polyphenol. Curcumin is the active substance of turmeric and curcumin is known as C.I. 75300, or Natural Yellow 3. The systematic chemical name is (1*E*,6*E*)-1,7-bis(4-hydroxy-3-methoxyphenyl)-1,6-heptadiene-3,5-dione.

It can exist at least in two tautomeric forms, keto and enol. The keto form is preferred in solid phase and the enol form in solution. Curcumin is a pH indicator. In acidic solutions (pH < 7.4) it turns yellow, whereas in basic (pH > 8.6) solutions it turns bright red.

Turmeric is considered highly auspicious in Hindu religious rituals and has been used extensively in various religious ceremonies for millennia. It is used in rituals to make an idol-form of Hindu god Ganesha (the remover of obstacles, is invoked at the beginning of almost any ceremony). A form of Ganesha is made instantaneously by mixing turmeric with water and forming it into a cone-like shape.

During the Thai-Pongal festival, a whole turmeric plant with fresh rhizomes is offered as a thanksgiving offering to Surya (the Sun god). A fresh plant turmeric plant is tied around the sacred Pongal pot in which an offering of Pongal is prepared.

In southern India, as a part of the marriage ritual, dried turmeric tuber tied with string is used to replace the Mangalsutra. This custom is seen in Hindu weddings. In western and coastal India, during marriages of the Marathi and Konkani communities turmeric tubers are tied with strings by the couple to their wrists during a ceremony called *Kankanabandhana*.

Turmeric is still used in rituals of the Hindu religion, and as a dye for holy robes, being natural, a synthetic form and cheap. Turmeric is in fact one of the cheapest spices. Although as a dye it is used similarly to saffron, the culinary uses of the two spices should not be confused and should never replace saffron in food dishes. Its use dates back nearly 4000 years, to the Vedic culture in India where it was used as a culinary spice and had some religious significance.

3. Give a brief note of the musical instruments Nadaswaram and Taval played in Hindu temples?

The Nadaswaram which is also termed as Nagaswaram, Nadhaswaram *Nayanam*, *Nagachinnam* or Nathaswaram, is one of the predominantly popular classical Karnatic musical instruments in Hindu traditions and the world's loudest non-brass acoustic instrument. The term 'Nagaswaram' is to the fact that this musical instrument resembles a snake in its look maybe the reason it was named as *Nagaswaram* or *Nagachinnam*. In Tamil, *Naagam* means serpent (snake). In one of the Kriti, of Muthuswamy Dikshitar, *tyāgarāja mahadhvajārōha* about Lord Siva, it is refer to in the *anupallavi* (the second stanza of the song) ...*nāga svara maddalādi vādyam* ...to Lord Siva as the One who is accompanied by the music of *Nagaswara* and *Maddala*.

Nadaswaram is one of the most auspicious musical instruments of Hindus in South India. The various Hindu religious rituals and ceremonies in the temples, other places of social activities and marriages are accompanied with the music being performed by this musical instrument. In temples, for all the rituals, starting from the morning *Thirupalliyehuchi* (the first puja in the morning) to the *Ardhajaama pooja* and *Palliarai pooja* (the last puja at night) *the* Nadaswaram takes an important role. *The* Nadaswaram is accompanied with an instrument known as Taval. It is a two sided drum with one side played with one hand while the other side is with a stick.



There are ragas specifically played during the different times of the day for the different rituals that take place in a temple. The ragas are sometimes classified on the basis of the time of the day when they are played .

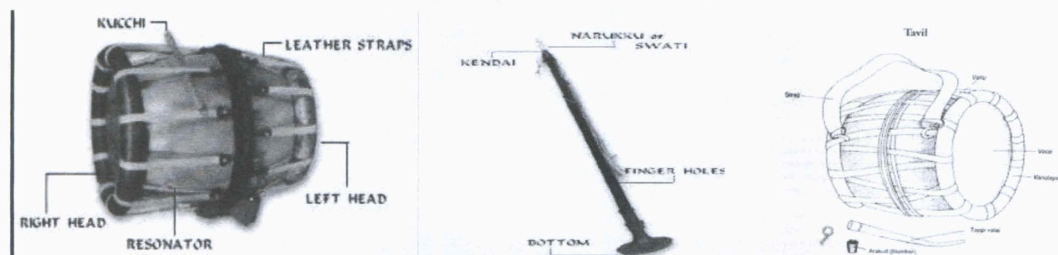


The *Nadaswaram* is considered to be a *Rajavadyam* (*Raja-royal Vadya*-instrument) and the instrument's different parts are supposed to represent different forms of God about which we will see next. In conventional Carnatic music, the word *Nada* is of significance. It literally is supposed to refer to music or sound pleasing to one's ear. *Nada* also considered as the path to *mukti* or salvation. In his kriti *Nadatanumanisam*, Sri Thyagaraja Swamy pays obeisance to the Lord as the embodiment of *Nada*. According to this contemplation, the expression '*Nadaswaram*' suits absolutely to the auspiciousness of this musical instrument.

The *Nadaswaram* is a wind instrument similar to the North Indian *shehnai*. This musical instrument is considered to be auspicious, and is played in Hindu weddings and temples of the South India. The *Nadaswaram* is recognized as a *Mangala Vadya* (*mangala*: auspicious, *vadya*: instrument). This *Mangala Vadya* is customarily played in pairs, and accompanied by a pair of drums called *thavil*.

The *Nadaswaram* consists of three parts namely, *kuzhal*, *thimiru*, and *anasu*. Conventionally the main body of the *Nadaswaram* is constructed out of timber of a tree called *aacha*. Timbers of sandalwood, bamboo, metal like copper, alloy like brass and ivory are also used in the production of *Nadaswaram*.

The *Nadaswaram* is made of different parts which symbolize different forms of God. The bottom part (base) which is known as *Keezhu Anaichu*, is rounded (circular) and characterizes *Surya-deva* (the Sun). This musical instrument has a long tube like lengthy portion fitting with seven finger holes which is very unique aspect. These seven finger holes represent the *seven mothers* (*saptha matha*) of Hindu mythology. The body in itself is supposed to stand for Lord Brahma (The creator in Hindu Mythology) while the bore-hole characterizes Lord Vishnu while the music is the *Nada* which is embodied by Lord Siva. The top (apex) portion is termed the *Mel Anaichu* (*Mel* in Tamil refers to top and *Keezh* refers to bottom and *Anaichu* is fitting), is where the *seevali* is fitted. The *seevali* is the blow piece which is made of dried leaves of plant (*Korukku thattai* not very sure about this name though) which are generally obtained near river banks.



It is a double reed instrument (a vibrating part that produces the sound in this musical appliance) with a tapering bore which progressively broadens toward the lower end. This is customarily made of ebony. The apex segment of this has a metal staple (called *mel anaichu*) a small metallic cylinder (called *kendai*) is inserted into this which carries the mouthpiece made of reed. Furthermore spare reeds, a small ivory or horn needle is attached to the *Nadaswaram*. This horn needle or ivory is used to clear the reed of saliva and other debris and allows free passage of air. A metallic bell (called *Keezh anaichu*) forms the bottom end of the instrument.

Conventionally the *Nadaswaram* has seven finger-holes. There are five additional holes drilled at the bottom of the *Nadaswaram* which are used as controllers. The *Nadaswaram* has a range of two and a half octaves like that of a flute. But unlike the flute where semi and quarter tones are produced by the partial opening and closing of the finger holes, in the *Nadaswaram* they are produced by adjusting the pressure and force of the stream of air in the pipe of the *Nadaswaram*.

The *Nadaswaram* consists of different parts which represent different forms of God. The bottom part which is called *Keezhu Anaichu*, is circular and represents *Suryadeva* or the Sun. The instrument has a long tube like fitting with seven finger holes. These represent the *seven mothers (saptha matha)* of Hindu mythology. The body in itself is supposed to represent Lord Brahma (The creator in Hindu Mythology) while the bore-hole represents Lord Vishnu while the music is the *Nada* which is embodied by Lord Shiva.

The top portion is called the *Mel Anaichu* (literally *Mel* in Tamil means top and *Keezh* means bottom and *Anaichu* is fitting), is where the *seevali* is fitted. The *seevali* is the blow piece which is made of dried leaves of plant (*Korukku thattai* not very sure about this name though) which are generally obtained near river banks.

Mallari is an exclusive rhythm based composition that is played by the *Nadaswaram* along with the *tavil*. Mallari is commonly played during the procession of the deity during temple festivals.

Generally Mallari is played in the raga *Gambheeranaatai*. Though there are different kinds of Mallari, the category of Mallari played during the procession is considered to be a special type. The other Mallari forms are played during other religious rituals at the temples.

There are a range of techniques in the performance of the *Nadaswaram* which include '*thu-thu karam*', '*thanna karam*', '*hum-karam*' '*akaaram*' etc. This categorization depends on the resonance of the sound that the *Nadaswaram* produces. The artist playing the *Nadaswaram* where there are seven playing holes, needs outstanding breath control to navigate through the notes cautiously and appropriately.

The characteristic features of playing *Nadaswaram* are the fast swara rolls (known as *Brigas*) and *viraladi* (*viral* means *fingers*, *adi* means *tap*). In playing *Nadaswaram* which has a lot to carry out with breath control, most *gamakas* (oscillations of swaras in their vicinity and transitional stages between two or more swaras) be able to be played wonderfully by the *Nadaswaram* only.



Rakthi ragas are thought to comprise of incredibly high melodic content. *Nadaswaram* has a special niche for playing such ragas and such playing is also classified as rakthi melam. The raga exposition is prolonged and intense and would also include exercises in various rhythm structures during playing in the *Nadaswaram*.

In the past, the *Nadaswaram* was played at a higher sonic pitch in contrast to what is being played now. The standard pitch used these days range from 2-1/2 to 4-1/2 which is from D# to F#. Previously the pitch used to be in the range of 5-1/2 to 7 (G# to B). The high pitch variety are smaller in length and are called *Timri Nadaswaram*, while the lower pitch version is called *Bari Nadaswaram*.

