



# International Journal of Sanskrit Research

अनन्ता

ISSN: 2394-7519

IJSR 2025; 11(5): 309-315

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[www.anantaajournal.com](http://www.anantaajournal.com)

Received: 01-08-2025

Accepted: 05-09-2025

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## Nāda-Brahma: The universal source of music

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### Abstract

Music is universal language beyond words, a language of heart that connects us to the divine. Natures reverberates with sounds and vibrations of subtle and prominent frequencies. Every being in the creation pulsates at a rhythm and synchronises with universal harmony. Sound has a profound influence on our body, mind and spirit. All of us have intrinsic ability to access the inherent power of sound through our voice.

In ancient India, music (*saṃgīta*) was defined as combination of *Gītam* (vocal melody), *vādyam* (playing on instruments) and *nṛttam* (dancing)<sup>1</sup> where dancing was guided by instrumental music which in its own turn follows the vocal practice. Therefore, the vocal melody (*gītam*) being the main constituent (of *saṃgīta*) is expounded in the first instance<sup>2</sup>.

Śāraṅgadeva (सारङ्गदेव) in his *Samgitaratnākara*<sup>3</sup> (सङ्गीतरत्नाकर) expressed the importance of *nāda* as: *Nāda is the very<sup>4</sup> essence of vocal music, instrumental music as these is enjoyable<sup>5</sup> and these are the manifestation of nāda where dance (नृत्य) follows<sup>6</sup> both*. Therefore, all three together are the constituent of *nāda*.

Most important element in Indian Classical Music is *NĀDA* as it is basically a musical sound which involves melodic or æsthetical sound as well as it is the basic element of the entire universe as it denotes the emergence of expressive utterance. On Indian concept *NĀDA* means *Mukti* or liberation from materialism.

**Keyword:** *nāda-brahma* (नाद-ब्रह्म), *svara* (स्वर), *śruti* (श्रुति)

### Introduction

According to Indian concept of Musical notes (*svara*, स्वर) evolved from *umbilicus/navel* (नाडि, *nāḍi*) i.e., from *Nāda-Brahma*<sup>7</sup> (नाद-ब्रह्म). Sound is the creator of the world as *Nāda* means 'sound' and *Brahma* means creator of the universe:

यदुक्तं ब्रह्मणः स्थानं ब्रह्मग्रन्थिश्च यो मतः।  
तन्मध्ये संस्थितः प्राणः प्राणाद्वह्निमुद्भवः॥  
वह्निमारूतसंयोगात्नादः समुपजायते।

<sup>1</sup> I/v-21 of Ref.11: गीतं वाद्यं तथा नृत्यं त्रयं सङ्गीतुच्यते। *gītaṁ vādyāṁ tathā nṛttaṁ trayaṁ saṃgītamucyate* |

<sup>2</sup> I/v-24 of Ref.11: नृत्यं वाद्यनुगं प्रोक्तं वाद्यं गीतानुवति च॥ अतो गीतं प्रधानत्वाद्वाद्यवभिधीयते। *nṛttaṁ vādyānugaṁ proktaṁ vādyāṁ gītānūvati ca | ato gītaṁ pradhānatvādvādyavabhidhiyate* |

<sup>3</sup> II/1: गीतं नादात्मकं वाद्यं नादव्यक्त्या प्रशस्यते। तद्वयानुगतं नृत्यं नादाधीनमतस्तयम्॥ *gītaṁ nāḍātmaṁ vādyāṁ nāḍavaktyā prasaśyate | tadvayānugataṁ nṛtyaṁ nāḍādhiṇamatastrayam* ||

<sup>4</sup> i.e., the intangible substance which manifests itself through the articulate sound. The manifest refers to the unmanifest by implication.

<sup>5</sup> *prasaśyate* (प्रशस्यते) literally means *is praised* but indicates to attain the excellence of beauty, or to attain enjoyable as beautiful.

<sup>6</sup> In ancient India, aesthetic concept of *rasa* and beauty and music (*saṃgīta*) comprises the three arts of vocal, instrumental music and dance.

<sup>7</sup> A primal word (i.e., OM) that refers to India's great classical music which was known to Indian sages from three-thousand years before our times. The *Nāda-Brahma*, cosmic sound and synonymous with परावाक *parāvāk*, means sound is God or God is sound.

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yaduktāṁ brahmaṇaḥ sthānaṁ brahmagranthīśca yo  
mataḥ |  
tanmadhye saṁsthitaḥ prāṇaḥ prāṇādviḥnisamudbhavaḥ ||  
vahnimārūtasānyogānnādaḥ samupajāyate |

On Brahma we should consider Brahma-gland<sup>8</sup> (ब्रह्मग्रन्थि)  
where Prāṇaḥ exists (प्राणः i.e., vital air).

न नादेन विना गीतं न नादेन स्वरः ।  
na nādēna vinā gītāṁ na nādēna svarāḥ |

Without evolution of sound/vibration (nāda, नाद), music and musical notes are not possible. It indicates creation of the cosmos, of the world is sound i.e., sound is the creator of world. According to Saṁgītāranākara of Śāraṁgadeva It is the small interval of time and are like the words of poetry or gesture of dance where *śrutis* are expressed in different sentiment and feeling in a group of five as moderate (मध्या, *madhyā*), keen (दीप्ता, *dīptā*), large (आयता, *āyatā*), compassionate (करुणा, *karuṇā*) and tender (मृदु, *mṛdu*)<sup>9</sup>. He also expressed that sound is first heard as *śruti* and through resonance it expands into a note (*svara*) to create an expression in mind of acceptor. According to *Harmonologia Musica* of 1702 by Andreas Werckmeister<sup>10</sup> we find relation of golden section<sup>11</sup> among cosmos<sup>12</sup>, human body<sup>13</sup> structure and music<sup>14</sup>. Pythagoras<sup>15</sup> had used his experiences on music in cosmology methodically with intuitive subjectivity to use uniform string to divide in the ratio  $1 : \frac{3}{4} : \frac{2}{3} : \frac{1}{2}$  or  $12 : 9 : 8 : 6$ <sup>16</sup> (which were known to be four stationary notes as Hypatē-Mi-12, Masē-La-9, Paramesē-Si-8 and Nētē-Mi-6) producing harmonious sounds where ratios of the vibrating numbers are 12:6, 12:8 and 8:6 producing intervals as octave<sup>17</sup>, fifth<sup>18</sup> and fourth<sup>19</sup>. This is known as harmonic

mean<sup>20</sup>. Here fifth and octave of a note by fixing musical bridges at  $\frac{2}{3}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the length of a musical-string<sup>21</sup> respectively where these make harmonic proportion as:

$$1 : \frac{1}{2} = 1 - \frac{2}{3} : \frac{2}{3} - \frac{1}{2}^{22}$$

which indicates that he was inventor musical science or musical canon<sup>23</sup>. The numbers 12, 8, 6 mentioned above are in harmonic progression<sup>24</sup> and also called as geometric harmony<sup>25</sup>. He also believed that separation of heavenly spheres was determined by the laws of musical harmony and the planets emitted different notes in harmony which is the doctrine of harmony of sphere<sup>26</sup>. Pythagoras commented that the universe sings and is constructed in accordance with harmony and motions of seven heavenly bodies to rhythm and songs<sup>27</sup>.

Assuming that the world is a large structured like a macrocosm where human beings are microcosm having relation between them. Then, well-proportioned human body with its limbs display in proportions musicae<sup>28</sup>.

Thus, the human body is structured by the golden section, by musical proportions as its shape is dominated the most perfect mathematical proportions.

From Ancient time, Indian music used to designate/recognised as gāndharva<sup>29</sup>

गन्धर्वस्तु नभश्चरे पुंस्कोकिले गायने च ।

मृगभेदे तुरङ्गमे अन्तराभवदेहे च ॥

*gandharvastu nabhaścāre puṁskokile gāyane ca |*

*mṛgabhedē turāṅgame antarābhavadehe ca ||*

*Gandharvas* were said to move in the firmament<sup>30</sup> (Ākāśa, आकाश), they were singer like male-cuckoo, speedy like deers and tough like horse which indicates that they

<sup>8</sup> Prāṇa (air) energy travels the body through channels called naḍis (नाडि) i.e., sound originate from it.

<sup>9</sup> पञ्चजातिषु सप्तसरेषु च सनाम श्रुति विभाजनम् - I-3- 27 to 39.

<sup>10</sup> A German musicologist, Born: 30 November, 1645 – Died: 26 October, 1706.

<sup>11</sup> A line divided into two segments or the length and the width of a rectangle and their sum. In numbers it follows Fibonacci's Numbers as: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34 etc. [Leonardo Bonacci (1170 CE–1240–50 CE) commonly known as Fibonacci, was an Italian Mathematician from the Republic of Pisa.]

<sup>12</sup> The sound is rather dry, but it starts to get lively as soon as one imagines that the golden section is a phenomenon involving the sixth, an interval of particular importance in music as well as in the cosmos.

<sup>13</sup> As per Thomas Michael Schmidt of University of Michigan said: There exists golden section in (a) The navel divides the entire body length; (b) The nipples divide the entire width of the human body with stretched arms; (c) The loin divides the distance from the ground to the nipples; (d) The knee divides the entire leg; (e) The eyebrows divide the head; (f) The elbow joint divides the entire arm including hand.

<sup>14</sup> The proportions of the golden section vascillate [fluctuate] around the major (3:5) and minor (5:8) sixths and around the so called ecmelic [In the context of musical intervals, ecmelic refers to intervals that are considered non-melodic or discordant, especially those with ratios beyond the superparticular ratios (e.g., 4:3, which is a fifth). These intervals are not as pleasing to the ear as emmelic (melodic) intervals, which are considered concordant where intervals are of the form 8:13, 13:21, etc.]

<sup>15</sup> Pythagoras of Samos, (Ancient Greek philosopher: Πυθαγόρας; 570BCE – 495 BCE). He used a simple apparatus, consisting of a string (monochord), could be stopped at different intervals using movable bridge to make experiments to have a simple ratio on the lengths of the string. On that the concordant intervals of the scale was in numerical ratios 2 : 1, 3 : 2 and 4 : 3.

<sup>16</sup> These are the four stationary notes and are gamut in ascending order.

<sup>17</sup> The interval between two notes where one has double the frequency of the other. When Pythagoras took a length of the string double that which gave high Mi, it gave the low Mi. That is octave. Greeks called it as diapason (διαπασσων, sc. χορδων). It expressed in the ratio 2:1 (διπλασιασος λόγος).

<sup>18</sup> It is the interval between the first and fifth notes of a major or minor scale i.e., tonic and dominant. Pythagoras took a length of string half as long again as that which gave the high Mi, it gave La. The interval we call the fifth i.e., dia pente (δμιόλιος λόγος). It expressed by ratio  $\frac{3}{2} : 2$  (ἡμιόλιος λόγος).

<sup>19</sup> It is an alternative guitar tuning where each string is tuned a perfect fourth interval apart. Pythagoras took a length of string one-third again as long as that gave the high Mi, it gave Si. This interval is fourth diatessaron (διάτεσσαρον, sc. χορδων). It is expressed by ratio  $\frac{4}{3} : 3$  (ἐπίτριτος λόγος).

<sup>20</sup>  $\frac{6}{12} + \frac{6}{8} = \frac{8}{12}$ .

<sup>21</sup> Greeks and other ancient peoples had already acquired familiarity of musical-string-instruments. Then every cithernist (player of ancient string-musical instrument) knew to obtain different sounds and pleasing combination sounds by pinching the string at certain place or changing the length of vibrating parts.

<sup>22</sup> The compass (μέγεθος) of the octave is a fifth and a fourth ( $\frac{3}{2} \times \frac{4}{3} = \frac{12}{6}$ ) and the note which is a fifth from nētē is a fourth from the hypatē, and vice-versa. The interval between the fourth and the fifth is expressed by the ratio  $\frac{9}{8} : 8$  (ἐπόδοος λόγος). This is tone (τονος) or pitch par excellence. As there is no (numerical) mean proportional between 1 and 2, neither the octave nor the tone can be divided into equal parts.

<sup>23</sup> His love of music and number made him to produce harmonic proportion.

<sup>24</sup>  $\frac{1}{8} - \frac{1}{12} = \frac{1}{6} - \frac{1}{8}$ .

<sup>25</sup> A cube has 12 sides, 8 angles and 6 faces.

<sup>26</sup> The Pythagoreans conceived the musical scale as a structural element in the cosmos i.e., The firmament was, moreover, pictured as a kind of harmony or harmony of spheres.

<sup>27</sup> According to Hippolytos (480 BCE - 406 BCE).

<sup>28</sup> musical proportion

<sup>29</sup> Applied to the Science and art of Music. The word was derived from Gandharva, a race of semi-divine beings settled in Gāndhāra or Khaṇḍahār of Afghanistan, who were artist with ability to be imaginative, intuitive of artistic creations.

<sup>30</sup> They used to live away from the local people i.e., on the small-mountain of Afghanistan which was considered to be the place between earth and heaven (semi-divine).

associated with *music* i.e., *Nāda-vidya/Nāda* also attributed to Ākāśa.

Gāndharva<sup>31</sup> was sacred music as it had grown and developed as a musical expression of the ancient seers towards the divine origin and ritual dedicational experience. They were also known as anādi<sup>32</sup> that it evolved from Sāma-veda. Therefore, Sāma is the penultimate cause of all musical forms<sup>33</sup>.

गान्धर्ववेदवत् स्वयमनादिर्व सामवेदप्रभवतऽपि वा ।  
gāndharvavedavat svayamanādirvā  
sāmavedaprabhavate'pi vā |

Gandharva-Veda<sup>34</sup> itself, or from the origin of the Sāma Veda i.e., a part of Sāma Veda.  
All songs (musical notes) were originated from Sāma<sup>35</sup>.  
Therefore, gāndharvas defined as:

दृष्टादृष्टफलसमवेदप्रभवानादिकालनिवृत्तम्  
dr̥ṣṭād̥r̥ṣṭaphalasāmavedaprabhavanādikālanivṛttam |

From the time of the origin of the Vedas and the results of the visualised and the non-visualised had been expressed by gāndharvas as musical notes.

Here smell of tones<sup>36</sup> (gandha of svara, स्वर-गन्ध) had been considered which includes harmonic tones<sup>37</sup> and resonance<sup>38</sup>. We find the activities and existence of gandharvas as Gandharva-sattva (गन्धर्व-सत्त्वा):

Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* (XXII-107):  
गान्धर्व वादे च नृते च रता हृष्टा मृजावती ।  
गन्धर्वसत्त्वा विज्ञेया स्निग्धत्वकेशलोचना ॥  
gāndharva vādde ca nr̥tte ca ratā hr̥ṣṭā mṛjāvātī |  
gandharvasattvā vijñeyā snigdhataṭvakeśalocanā ||

Gandharva woman takes delight to involve in gāndharva (gīta, गीत), Vādyā (वाद्) and dance (nr̥tta, नृत्त) and they were fond of cleanliness and neatness (snigdha, स्निग्ध) in skin, hair and eyes i.e., they maintained their beauties.  
Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* (XXVIII-8):

यत्तु तन्नीकृत प्रोक्तं नानातोद्दमाश्रयम् ।  
गान्धर्वमिति<sup>39</sup> तज्ज्ञेयं स्वरतालपदात्मक् ॥  
yattu tantrīkṛta proktaṁ nānātoddamāśrayam |  
gāndharvamiti tajjñeyaṁ svaratālapadātmak ||

<sup>31</sup> It actually indicates Gāndharva type of music and this is devised and artistically practiced by the talented and art-lovers who lived in the prehistoric Indus cities long before the advent of Vedic Aryans.

<sup>32</sup> existing since beginning of time i.e., like Vedas.

<sup>33</sup> सामभ्यो गीतमिति कथितम्, सामानि चात्र कारणकारणानि, गान्धर्व हि सामभ्यस्तस्माद्भयं गानं sāmabhyo gītāmiti kathitam, sāmāni cātra kāraṇakāraṇāni, gāndharva hi sāmabhyastasmādbhayaṁ gānaṁ | Songs from the Sāmas, therefore, the Gandharva is a song from the Sāmas.

<sup>34</sup> It deals with gandharvas.

<sup>35</sup> सामभ्यो गीतम् sāmabhyo gītām.

<sup>36</sup> According to *Nāṭya-Śāstra* and *Rāmāyaṇa* we find a gandharva named Tumburu who was expert in Dhaivata Rāga, Nīṣāda Rāga.

<sup>37</sup> Upasvara, उपस्वर

<sup>38</sup> Anusvara, अनुस्वर

<sup>39</sup> गान्धर्वो मितिर्मानं वर्तनम् अन्तर्भवो यस्य। *Gāndharvo mitirmānaṁ vartanam antarbhavo yasya* | Gandharva keeps friendship from their innermost heart.

All the string-instruments consist of notes (svara, स्वर) and was known to Gāndharva. They were also acquainted with time-measure (tāla, ताल) and verbal themes (pada, पद).  
Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* (XXVIII-9):

अत्यर्थमिष्टं देवानां तथा प्रीतिकरं पुनः ।  
गन्धर्वाणामिदं यस्मात् तस्माद् गान्धर्वमुच्यते ॥

atyarthamiṣṭaṁ devānāṁ tathā prītikaraṁ punaḥ |  
gandharvāṇāmidaṁ yasmāt tasmād gāndharvamucyate ||  
Gods desired to show much pleasure to gandharvas<sup>40</sup> for their superiority.

Gāndharva is combination of vocal music and instrumental music as explained in the following Śloka:  
Bharata's *Nāṭya-Śāstra* (XXVIII-10):

अस्य योनिर्भवेद् गात्र वीणा वंशस्तथैव च ।  
एतेषां चैव वक्षामि विधिं स्वरसमुत्थितम् ॥

asya yonirbhaved gātra vīṇā vaṁśasthaiva ca |  
eteṣāṁ caiva vakṣāmi vidhiṁ svarasamutthitam ||

Human source of expressing musical notes (svara, स्वर) by human throat, Vīṇā (Stringed musical instrument, वीणा) and flute (Vaṁśī, वंशी).

गान्धर्व त्रिविधं विद्वात् स्वरतालपदात्मकम् ।  
त्रिविधस्यापि वक्षामि लक्षणं कर्म चैव हिः ॥  
gāndharva trividhaṁ viddāt svaratālapadātmakam |  
trividhasyāpi vakṣāmi lakṣaṇa karma caiva hiḥ ||

So, Gāndharva was of three kinds<sup>41</sup>. that of notes (svara), that of tāla (time-measure) and that of verbal theme (pada).  
Ultimately as per *Brahmaṇḍa Purāṇa* (ब्रह्माण्ड पुराण)/*Brahma Purāṇa* (ब्रह्म पुराण) It has been expressed that on the way of singing songs *Brahmā* gave birth of Gāndharva and has been expressed in following Śloka:

गायते गां ततस्तस्य गन्धर्वा जज्ञिरे सुताः ॥  
धयेति धातु कविभिः पानार्थं परिपठ्यते ।  
पिबतो जज्ञिरे वाचं गन्धर्वास्तेन ते स्मृताः ॥  
gāyate gāṁ tatastasya gandharvā jajñire sutāḥ ||  
dhayeti dhātu kavibhiḥ pānārthaṁ paripāṭhyate |  
pibato jajñire vācaṁ gandharvāstena te smṛtāḥ||

Who exercise for smell<sup>42</sup> are known to be gandharva i.e., who were able to make them and neighbours to be delighted with vocal as well instrumental music were gandharvas.

**Methods:** Use Sanskrit literatures.

**Result:** Music evolved from Nāda-Brahma.

<sup>40</sup> Vedic Aryans recognised them as GODs as they were experts in music, dancing, drumming, architecture and the master-arts of city building, sanitary system etc. because they were developed class of civilised artistic peoples.

<sup>41</sup> The three of gāndharva seems to be three kinds of musical performances in which individual notes, beating time, or songs respectively play their principal or any part.

<sup>42</sup> गन्धर्व अर्वति इति। gandha arvvati iti| i.e., persons admire, smell of music, musical notes (through throat and instrument) as well express delight of it.



## Discussion

*Nāda* manifests the letters (alphabets) where letters constitute the words and words make sentences<sup>43</sup>. Therefore, entire business of life is carried on through language, particularly music. Therefore, the whole phenomena (i.e., the world) is based on *nāda*.

As per following *Śloka*: (II/3 of Ref.10) *Nāda* is two fold, produced (*āhata*, आहत) and unproduced (*anāhata*, अनाहत). It manifested in the human body which is known as embodiment.

आहतोऽनाहत चेति द्विधा नादो निगद्यते।

सोऽयं प्रकाशते पिण्डे तस्मात्पिण्डोऽभिधीयते ॥३॥

āhato'nāhata ceti dvighā nādo nigadyate |

so'yaṁ prakāśate piṇḍe tasmātpiṇḍo'bhidhīyate ||3||

*Nāda* is two-fold (produced/āhata<sup>44</sup> and unproduced/anāhata<sup>45</sup>). As it manifests itself within the human body which is known as embodiment. Music is the elevated form of āhata nāda. Two kinds of nāda are very closely related where śruti represents their joining.

*Nāda* is the basis, not only of music and dance, though specially related to it, but also of the entire business of life; since it constitutes the very substance of speech which is the only means of communication.

Definition of *svara*: When a string of a *vīṇā* is plucked, the very first sound produced is *śruti* and the very next sound following it i.e., resounding of *śruti* is called *svara*. As per III/24b-25a of Ref.10:

श्रुत्यन्तरभावी यः स्निग्धोऽनुरणनात्मकः ॥२४॥

स्वतो रञ्जयति श्रोतृचित्तं स्वर उच्यते ॥२५॥

śrutyanantarabhāvī yaḥ snigdho'nuraṇanātmakaḥ ||24||

svato rañjayati śrotracittaṁ sa svara ucyate ||25||

Immediate consequence upon *śruti* to make it creamy<sup>46</sup> and resonating<sup>47</sup> the sound to create delights at the minds of listeners is called *svara*. That is *svara* is that which by itself pleasing the ear and the mind; which permeates the *śruti*-s<sup>48</sup> and which is tender and harmonic.

So, *svara* is the basis of music

Now, we want to express the etymology of the word *svaras* (स्वर) [स्वरशब्दस्य व्युत्पत्तिरिह कथ्यते<sup>49</sup> /*Svaraśabdasya vyutpattiḥ kathyate*]

a) Derived from *rāj* [राज्] meaning brilliance with prefixing the word *sva* [स्व] indicating self, appearing as self-brilliance or shines<sup>50</sup> by itself<sup>51</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> accumulation meaningful words.

<sup>44</sup> means struck i.e., produced by striking or friction of two objects. So, it is created or object of sense-perception or perceptible sound.

<sup>45</sup> means unstruck i.e., not-created or matter of mystic experience or absolute sound used in Yoga.

<sup>46</sup> It signified as *snigdha* (स्निग्ध) which is soft and capable of heard at a distance in physics it signified as viscous (highly resistance to flow) but here it used as quality of musical sound (slow changing the flow of vibrating sound).

<sup>47</sup> It is post-sound from *raṇ* (रण) to ring or resounding.

<sup>48</sup> The *svara* permeates the *śruti*-s means *svara*-s are involved in *śruti*-s.

<sup>49</sup> From *Brhaddeśi* by Śrī Matamga Muni - 53 (श्रीमतङ्गमुनि प्रणीता बृहद्देशी-श्लोक ५३)

<sup>50</sup> From *Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali - I.2.29 we find कथं हलो नाम स्वर प्राप्तिः स्यात्। (*kathaṁ halo nāma svara prāpti svāt*) means voice creates *svara* [page.203]

- It is *dhvani* [ध्वनि] or sound of that type which is the progenitor of *raga* [राग] indicating colourful delight<sup>52</sup>.
- In the very beginning music was designated as *gāndharva* (गान्धर्व) where *Nārada*<sup>53</sup> (नारद) was the creator who brought music to earth<sup>54</sup>.
- Svara* is collection of notes which is based on words i.e., *pada* (पद) accompanied with time-measurement i.e., *tāla* (ताल) executing carefully/attentiveness<sup>55</sup> is called music or *gāndharva* (गान्धर्व)<sup>56</sup>.

Dattilam-6-7 : (दत्तिलम्)-६-७:

श्रुतयोऽथ स्वरा ग्रामौ मूर्च्छनास्तानसंयुताः।

स्थानानि वृत्तयश्चैव शुष्कं साधारणे तथा ॥६॥

जातयश्चैव वर्णाश्च नानालङ्कारसंयुताः।

एष स्वरगतोद्देशः संक्षेपेणाथ निर्णयः ॥७॥

Śutayo'tha svarā grāmau mūrchanāstānasaiyutāḥ |

Sthānāni vṛttayaścaiva śuṣkaṁ sādharmaṇe tathā ||6||

Jātayaścaiva varṇāśca nānalāṅkārasaiyutāḥ |

Eṣa svaragatoddeśaḥ saṅkṣepeṇātha nirṇayaḥ ||7||

The topics included within *svaras* (स्वर) are *śrutis* (श्रुति), *grāmas* (ग्राम), *mūrchanās* (मूर्च्छना), *tānas* (तान), *sthānas* (स्थान), *vṛttis* (वृत्ति), *śuṣkas* (शुष्क) and *sādharmaṇas* (साधारण).

According to Śrī Pārśvadeva (श्री पार्शदिव) *Sthānas*<sup>57</sup> (स्थानानि) are places within the human body from where evolution of *svaras* (स्वर) take places and these are three folds.

Śrī Pārśvadeva-I/9: (श्री पार्शदिव)-१/९:

तान्यहं नाममात्रेणानिरुक्ति सहितं कथम् (कथयामि) ।

स्वरादिनाम् उत्पत्ति तुत्वात् स्थानम् ॥९॥

Tānyahaṁ nāmamātreṇānirūkti sahitaṁ katham (kathāmi) |

Svarādinām utpatti tutvāt sthānam ||9||

Here etymology of *Sthāna* is indicating the birth places of *svara*.

Śrī Pārśvadeva-I/10: (श्री पार्शदिव)-१/१०:

त्रीणि स्थानानिहृत्कण्ठशिरासीति समासतः।

एकैकमपितेषु स्याद् द्वाविंशतिविधायुतम् ॥

Triṇi sthānānihr̥tkanṭhaśirāśīti samāsataḥ |

Ekaikamapitepu syād dvāviṁśatividhāyutam ||10||

These are three-fold which are heart, throat and head (lower<sup>58</sup>, middle<sup>59</sup> and upper<sup>60</sup> register respectively) which are intensified with 22 (twenty) grades i.e., microtones<sup>61</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> *rāj* dīptāviti ghātoḥ svaśabdapūrvakasya ca | svayaṁ yo rājate yasmāt tasmādeṣa svarāḥ smṛtaḥ || राज् दीप्ताविति घातोः स्वशब्दपूर्वकस्य च। स्वयं यो राजते यस्मात् तस्मादेष्टः स्वरः स्मृतः ॥

<sup>52</sup> *rāga*janako dhvaniḥ svara iti | रागजनको ध्वनिः स्वर इति।

<sup>53</sup> He was self-evaluator *Svayaṁbhū* (स्वयंभू) and co-sharer of creating music were *gandharvas* (गान्धर्व).

<sup>54</sup> *gāndharvaṁ nārada*dibhyaḥ prattamādaḥ svayambhuvā | vidhivan nārada<sup>nātha</sup> prthivyāṁ avatāritam || गान्धर्वं नारदादिभ्यः प्रतमादौ स्वयंभुवा। विधिवन नारदेनाथ पृथिव्यां तारितम् ॥

<sup>55</sup> Here this word attentiveness indicates bringing right understanding into practice.

<sup>56</sup> *pada*sthasvarasaṅghātas tālena sumitas tathā | prayuktaś cāvadhānena gāndharvam abhidhīyate || पदस्थस्वरसंगतस् तालनसुमितस् तथा। प्रयुक्तस् चावधानेन गान्धर्वम् अभिधीयते ॥

<sup>57</sup> Here it is the birth places of *svaras* (स्थानानि).

<sup>58</sup> *mandra* (मन्द्र).

<sup>59</sup> *madhya* (मध्य).

<sup>60</sup> *tāra* (तार).

Śrī Pārśvadeva-I/11: (श्री पार्शदिव)-१/११:  
द्वाविंशतिविधो मन्द्रो ध्वनि संजायते हृदि ।  
यथोत्तरमसौ नादोवीणायामधरोत्तरम् ॥११॥  
Dvāviṁśatavidho mandro dhvani sañjāyate hṛdi |  
Yathoṭṭaramasau nādoṇīyāyāmadharottaram ॥11॥

Twenty-two sound appears from heart (lower register). The sound grows louder as it moves upwards in human body whereas it appears louder in Vīṇā<sup>62</sup> when moving downward (Indian string instruments).

Śrī Pārśvadeva-I/12: (श्री पार्शदिव)-१/१२:  
स एव द्विगुणोमध्यः कण्ठस्थाने यथाक्रमम् ।  
स एव मस्तके तारः स्यान्मध्याद् द्विगुणःक्रमात् ॥१२॥  
Sa eva dviguṇomadyaḥ kaṇṭhasthāne yathākramam |  
Saeva mastake tāraḥ sthānamadyādviguṇaḥkramāt॥12॥

This appearing sound becomes twice higher when reaches throat and in Indian context it is known as Madhya position afterwards that sound reaches head to becomes again two-times higher i.e., at the Tāra-sthāna or at the higher register where intensity of sound progresses louder in Geometrical Progression with common ratio 2 or loudness moves in multiple of 2 i.e., twice or doubled.

Śrī Pārśvadeva-I/13: (श्री पार्शदिव)-१/१३:  
इति स्वरगता ज्ञेयाः श्रुतयः स्वरवेदिभिः ।  
अन्तरस्वरवर्तिन्यो ह्यन्तरश्रुतयो मताः ॥१३॥  
Iti svaragatā jñeyāḥ śrutayaḥ svaravedibhiḥ |  
Antarasvaravartinyo hyantaraśrutayo matāḥ ॥13॥

Śrutis (श्रुति) form svaras (स्वर) i.e., notes and exist between notes which are known as antaravartani )अनंतरवर्तिनि (i.e., lying between notes.

Śrī Pārśvadeva-I/14: (श्री पार्शदिव)-१/१४:  
। वीणायां श्रुतयः ।  
नाभौ यद् ब्रह्मणः स्थानं यत्कण्ठेन परिस्फुटम् ।  
शक्योऽदर्शयितुं तस्मादवीणायाम्त्रिवोधतः ॥१४॥  
| Viṇāyān śrutayaḥ |  
Nābhau yad brahmaṇaḥ sthānaṁ yatkaṇṭhena parisphuṭam |  
Śkyo'darśayituṁ tasmādvīṇāyāmtannivodhataḥ॥14॥

According to Indian concept of Classical Music, Naval is the residing place of Śrutis (श्रुति) i.e., Brahma (ब्रह्म)<sup>63</sup> these frequencies propagated towards throat. Śrī Matamga Muni in his Bṛhaddeśi expressed details of anatomical process through which vibration/sound or nāda is

produced within human physique at Brahmagranthi<sup>64</sup> (ब्रह्मग्रन्थि). This had been recognised as Brahma-nāda.

देहस्य शरीरस्य कन्दो विस्तारकारणम् । उत्सेधो दीर्घोच्छायः ।  
नाभिस्थितश्चतुरङ्गल प्रमाणकः । तस्य नाम ब्रह्माग्रन्थिरिति । तन्मध्ये  
इति । तस्य ब्रह्मग्रन्थेर्मध्ये नाभिचक्राख्यं चक्रं द्वादशदलमस्ति ।  
dehasya śarīrasya kando vistārakāraṇam | utsedho dīrghocchāyaḥ |  
nābhisthitaścaramaṅgala pramāṇakaḥ | tasya nāma brahmāgranthiriti |  
tanmadhye iti | tasya bramagranthermadhye nābhicakraḥkhyāncakraṁ  
dvādaśadalamasti |

The trunk of the body indicates expansion of the body i.e., elevation. The navel is called the Brahma-Granthi. Within the middle of that Brahma Granthi there exist twelve-petalled chakra called the navel chakra or nābhi-cakra.

The exact location of Brahma-Granthi within human body was explained by Śārngadeva (सारङ्गदेव) in his Saṁgītaratnākara (सङ्गीतरत्नाकर) within The Genesis of the Human Embodiment.

Saṁgītaratnākara (सङ्गीतरत्नाकर); Section-3/3-4:

On the physiological aspect, propagation of musical notes from navel to mouth (कण्ठ) may be expressed as (: vital force (prāṇaḥ, प्राणः) stationed around the root of the ,navel rising upwards<sup>65</sup> gradually manifests ā-navel to pass from the da the cavity of the mouth as it -the cerebrum-the throat-the heart passes through them.

Within Brahmagranthi resides the vital breadth i.e., prāṇa. It gives rise to a vital fire i.e., vahnī, where conjunction of this fire and breadth produces nāda: Bṛhaddeśi-18-19

यदुक्तम ब्रह्मणः स्थानं ब्रह्मग्रन्थिश्च यः स्मृतः

तन्मध्ये संस्थितः प्राणः वह्निसमुद्गमः

वह्निमारुतसंयोगात्तादः समुपजायते

yaduktam brahmaṇaḥ sthānaṁ brahmāgranthiśca yaḥ  
smṛtaḥ

tanmadhye saṁsthiṭaḥ prāṇaḥ vahnīsamudgamah

vahnīmārutasānyogānnādaḥ samupajāyate

n nāda<sup>66</sup> be subdivided into syllable we na<sup>67</sup> of nāda represents the vital-force and da<sup>68</sup> of nāda represents fire. Thus, product of these two syllables, as union, create nāda<sup>69</sup>. This nāda indicates the consciousness of sound. which leads us to produce musical notes i.e., melodic sound.

The nāda has been differentiated into twenty-two grades as śruti-s<sup>70</sup> according to pitch of its audibility. These produce twenty-two graded sounds of the octave. The lowest position nāḍī (नाड़ी) produces lowest pitch and pitch gradually rises as

<sup>64</sup> It is situated at the centre of the human-body, known as abode of Brahmā, near navel i.e., at nābhi-cakra (नाभि-चक्र) according to Tāntric anatomy (तान्त्रिक शारीरस्थान)

<sup>65</sup> The region below the navel pertains to anāhata-nāda (अनाहत-नाद) i.e., unmanifested sound.

<sup>66</sup> It indicates perception on sound in undifferentiated form of subject and object as well i.e., consciousness of sound.

<sup>67</sup> refer to prāṇaḥ.

<sup>68</sup> refer to agni.

<sup>69</sup> Śaṁgītaratnākara of Śārngadeva (सङ्गीतरत्नाकर); Section-3 / 6: नकारं प्राणनामानं दकारमनलं विदुः । जातः प्राणाग्निसंयोगात्तेन नादोऽभिधीयते ॥ nakāraṁ prāṇanāmānaṁ dakāramanalaṁ viduḥ | jātaḥ prāṇāgnisānyogāttena nādo'bhidhiyate ||

<sup>70</sup> refer to agni.

<sup>71</sup> audibles.

<sup>61</sup> Microtones are pitches in music that sit outside the standard notes of a Western music scale. They are not found on a standard Western piano keyboard but can be expressed in TANPURA (The tanpura does not play a melody, but rather creates a meditative ambience, supporting and sustaining the performance of another musician or vocalist, as well as for musicians accompanying a dance performance.), and should instead be imagined as any of the infinite possibilities of notes you might hear in between any two consecutive piano notes, or notes in standard scales. Śrutis (श्रुति) are the microtones in Indian Classical Music; It has 22 divisions (recognised as infinite in number in Indian Classical Music). Microtones are a fundamental part of the Indian melodic system, creating a rich and nuanced sound.

<sup>62</sup> All types of string-instruments such as Vīṇā, Sitar etc.

<sup>63</sup> It is origin of Śrutis (श्रुति). It is the small interval of time and are like the words of poetry or gesture of dance.

the struck by the vital breadth (mārutahāti, मारुतहाति) and ultimately twenty-two śrutis resides at throat and another at head. So, śrutis<sup>71</sup> are that distinction between two is cognisable by the ear<sup>72</sup>.

Therefore, there are three registers of seven notes where each of them twice or double the previous one comprising twenty-two grades of sound. So, Śrutis (श्रुति) are the smallest grades of sound analogues to microtones forming *Svaras*. These twenty-two microtones are too much closer with amminute difference and as per clarifications of Indian Classical music concept these cannot be expressed properly by human voice and can only shown through *Vinā*.

It was believed of ancient Munis<sup>73</sup> that śrutis give rise to svaras but not vice-versa. They describe the relation between them as: “through the process of deduction (arthāpatti<sup>74</sup>, अर्थपत्ति), inference (anumāna<sup>75</sup>, अनुमान) and through direct perception, śrutis are found to be the cause that manifests svaras”<sup>76</sup>.

अर्थपत्त्यानुमानेन प्रत्यक्षज्ञानतोऽपि वा।

गृह्यन्ते श्रुतयस्तावत् स्वराभिर्व्यक्तिहेतवः॥

arthāpattyanumānena pratyakṣajñānato’pi vā |

grhyante śrutayastāvat svarābhivṛtyahetavaḥ ||

So, they used two standard pramānas<sup>77</sup> by words arthāpatti and anumāna.

The materials of music are sounds, tones and vocables with all their qualitative richness and also perhaps silence or rests. They are both physical<sup>78</sup> and psychological in a complementary sense. In Indian exoteric<sup>79</sup> music, śruti is the elemental spiritual sound which constitutes the primary approach of this art. In Āgamaṇi (आगमणि), śruti is defined as sound of self-expression<sup>80</sup> i.e., not dependent on any other support. Similarly, svara or tone is defined<sup>81</sup> as esoteric tone is self-delighting or self-luminous independent of any aid or support, physical or psychological.

## Conclusion

*Nāda-Brahma* is the primal word of Indian Spirituality to represent India’s great Classical music<sup>82</sup> as well as this is the spirituality of humankind. In wider sense the word is spirituality of the world will correspond with the findings of modern science<sup>83</sup>, cosmology<sup>84</sup>, morphology<sup>85</sup>, biology<sup>86</sup>,

mythology or metaphysical<sup>87</sup>, harmonic studies<sup>88</sup>, astrophysics<sup>89</sup> and nuclear physics<sup>90</sup> as per Asian sages, particularly Indian sages, because they knew many of these things, expressed hypothetically, two or three thousand years before our era and these were established by modern scientists.

Rendering *Om* in a proper way develops *breath-control*, *voice-sustainability*, *quality of sound* makes improvement in music.

*Nāda-Brahma* means not only the God (*Brahmā*) along with involvement of sound<sup>91</sup>.

Gītādi (गीतादि) means singing or songs but gīta (गीत) or vocal music is basic to Indian music as it has already been mentioned. Moreover, gīta also used in general sense of music whereas saṃgīta, (सङ्गीत) includes instrumental music, vocal music and dance.

Theoretically, *octave* could be divided into not only in twenty-two Śrutis but into an infinite number of intervals. Then that pitch can be lowered over infinitesimal i.e., atomic intervals where such extremely subtle distinctions in pitch will be beyond grasping<sup>92</sup>. as human ear has range of capacity to hear frequencies.

According to *vṛtti* in *Bṛhaddeśi* different metaphysical views concerning *śruti* and profounds a monistic view regarding the nature of *śruti* which, apparently, indicates one in reality where its plurality is an illusory phenomenon connected with the fact that a single indivisible *nāda* arising from the navel ascends up in the human frame in distinct specific steps such that each of these steps of the *nāda* appears as a different *śruti* but it is one.

Ultimately, I am eager to mention the comments by the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, the great seventeenth-century philosopher and mathematician: *Music is a hidden arithmetic exercise of the soul, which does not know that it is dealing*

movements of the planets. British chemist John Newlands pointed out that elements of the same group appear in musical intervals. It is recognizable that the numbers of analogous elements generally differ from each other by seven or one of its multiples. Therefore, it can be designated as to follow proportion of LAW OF OCTAVE.

<sup>84</sup> Johanns Kepler as a musician said six-part harmony motet (Then six planets were known to him as after his death three other planets discovered.). It is very interesting that Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are rhythmic planets and beat relative to each other. He ultimately correlated the musical tones and intervals with the movements of the planets and their astrological functions which was Cosmo-theological view.

<sup>85</sup> As per American Psychologist George Leonard: At the root of all power and motion there is music and rhythm, the play of pattern frequencies against the matrix of time. More than 2600 years ago, Pythagoras told to his followers that stone is frozen music and this intuition has been fully validated by modern sciences as we now know that every particle in the physical universe takes its characteristics from the pitch and pattern and overtones of its particular frequencies, its singing.

<sup>86</sup> The science of harmonics knows that any form of organic life such as fish, flower, leaf fruit, beetle and any creature create sound.

<sup>87</sup> A. Schopenhaur (1819) said: music is the purest incarnation of the absolute will and the expression of the human feelings, love-joy-horror etc., in their abstract interpretation as metaphysical idea.

<sup>88</sup> Pythagoras expressed Harmony of spheres; Plato in his *Timæus* and *Harmonice Mundi* by Johannes Kepler.

<sup>89</sup> The giant planet Jupiter produces his own peculiar noise. The sun makes its own noise too (hisses and crackling) when it is at relative quietude and roars of alarming intensity when spews giant portions of matter far out into space.

<sup>90</sup> The edge of galaxy creates hissing cacophony of sound, this sound produced by quick shifts in molecular and atomic energy levels in gases made hot by newly born stars.

<sup>91</sup> creation is sound, cosmos is sound, sound is joy, emptiness is sound, spirit and soul is sound.

<sup>92</sup> Nāṭya-Śāstra - XXVIII / 27-28: यद्यपि परमाणुतोऽप्युत्करषप्रकर्शो वा भवेद धनेर्विशेषस्तथापि नासौ गृहीतुं पार्यते॥ yadyapi paramāṇuto’pyutkarṣaprakārśo vā bhavet dhanervīṣeṣastathāpi nāsau grhītuṃ pāryate ||.

<sup>71</sup> Different kinds of musical tones distinguishable through the ear.

<sup>72</sup> Nāṭya-Śāstra - XXVIII / 24: श्रुतिश्च नाम श्रोत्रगम्यं वैलक्षण्यं यावता शब्देनोत्पाद्यते | śrutīśca nāma śrotragamaṇyāṇ vailakṣaṇyaṇ yāvata śabdenopādyaṇte |

<sup>73</sup> Maṭaṅga Muni & Dattilā Muni.

<sup>74</sup> negative inference i.e., expressing the inference in negative way: Example - pīno devadatto diva ne bhukte (पीनो देवदत्त दिवो न भुक्ते) which means that Devadatta does eat during the day which leads to deduce that he must be eating at night.

<sup>75</sup> inference: Where fire, there smoke exists - yatra dhūmatatrāgniḥ (यत्र धूमस्तत्राग्निः).

<sup>76</sup> There exist different opinions on this relation but I think this is most admissible.

<sup>77</sup> valid means of knowledge.

<sup>78</sup> pulsations in the air.

<sup>79</sup> suitable for communicate to general public.

<sup>80</sup> निरपेक्ष स्वरः nirapekṣa svara.

<sup>81</sup> स्वतो रञ्जयति इति स्वरः or स्वतो राजते इति स्वरः

<sup>82</sup> Plotius, a Hellenistic philosopher, wrote: All music, based upon melody and rhythm, is the earthly representative of heavenly music.

<sup>83</sup> Thomas Michael Schmidt said: The concept held in antiquity that all terrestrial music in only a pale reflection or kind of substitute for harmony in the sky; thus, becomes true in a concrete sense, because the same mathematical proportions are the basis of both our musical sounds and the

with numbers, because it does many things by way of unnoticed conceptions which with clear conception it could not do. Those who believe that nothing can happen in the soul of which the soul is not conscious are wrong. For this reason the soul, although not realising that it is involved in mathematical computation, still senses the effect of this unnoticeable forming of numbers either as a resultant feeling of well-being in the case of harmonies or as discomfort in the case of disharmonies. He paved the way for the psychological method of musical aesthetics by interpreting music as the unconscious exercise in arithmetic.

Music originated from the sound (*nāda*) which is the product of ether<sup>93</sup> (*ākāśa*). Sound originates in the living-beings from the friction<sup>94</sup> of air and heat energy<sup>95</sup>. First it evolves in a casual form (*anāhata*) and then in a gross form (*āhata*) to emanates through vocal chord<sup>96</sup> as sweet and soothing.

The way by which music works is also the way the world of objects and events works. The deep structure of music is the same as the deep structure of everything else.

Transliteration chart

Sanskrit	Transliteration	Sanskrit	Transliteration	Sanskrit	Transliteration
अ	A, a	आ	Ā, ā	इ	I, i
ई	Ī, ī	उ	U, u	ऊ	Ū, ū
ऋ	R, r	ए	E, e	ऐ	Ai, ai
ओ	O, o	औ	Au, au	क	K, k
ख	Kh, kh	ग	G, g	घ	Gh, gh
ङ	M, m	च	C, c	छ	Ch, ch
ज	J, j	झ	Jh, jh	ञ	ñ
ट	T, t	ठ	Th, th	ड	D, d
ढ	Dh, dh	ण	N, n	त	T, t
थ	Th, th	द	D, d	ध	Dh, dh
न	N, n	प	P, p	फ	Ph, ph
ब	B, b	भ	Bh, bh	म	M, m
य	Y, y	र	R, r	ल	L, l
व	V, v	श	Ś, ś	ष	S, ś
स	S, s	ह	H, h	.	ñ
:	ḥ	म्	m̐		

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<sup>93</sup> शब्द आकाश सम्भवः । śabda ākāśa sambhavaḥ ।

<sup>94</sup> प्राण-वायु / prāṇa-vāyu - vital-breath.

<sup>95</sup> अग्नि / agni - will power.

<sup>96</sup> It is known as sound.