

Udupi Mutt

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Source: *The Hindu*

Manifest pedagogy: Udupi is an important cultural Centre of India associated with Indian Heritage. It is an important centre for the Dvaita vada and carnatic music. It is a centre for numerous folk traditions too. There is a good possibility of a question on Udupi in the prelims of this year because of the trigger of the death of the seer at udupi.

In news: Udupi Pejawar Mutt seer Vishweshwara Teertha Swami passed away recently.

Placing it in syllabus: Dvaita philosophy

Dimensions:

- Udupi as a cultural Centre
- Madhva acharya and his philosophy of dvaita vada
- Carnatic music and its association with Udupi
- Essential characters of Carnatic music

Content:

Udupi as a cultural Centre:

Udupi city of Karnataka state is the heavenly abode of Lord Krishna which has attained international repute on the cultural frontage. It is also known as the **temple city**.

Udupi is known as **Rajata Peetha and Shivalli (Shivabelle)**. Udupi is famous for its cuisine, which differs from South Indian cuisine as it follows the **Satvik discipline of cooking**.

It is upholding its exclusive ethnic traditions of Yakshagana, Bhuta Kola, Nagaradhane, Aati Kalenja and Karangolu.

Yakshagana: Yakshagana, which literally means 'the song of the

Yaksha' is a theater form wherein the collage of music, dance, dialogue, costume, make-up and stage techniques collectively presents a unique performance. It emerged during the Bhakti Movement and developed from the pre-classical music and theatre prevailing in that era. The Yakshagana Performances normally narrate the stories from various Indian Epics and religious scriptures such as the Puranas.

Bhuta Kola: It is a traditional ritual wherein the spirits are worshipped and solicited for their assistance in fertility and prosperity. The term 'Bhuta' means the supernatural beings while 'Kola' means worship.

Nagaradhane: 'Nagaradhane' means the worship of the Nagas (Cobras and snakes) is believed to have perpetuated by the Bunts of Tulu Nadu who claim to be the descendants of the Nagavansha. Snakes are enshrined in 'Nagabana' shrines and worshipped as an emblem of fertility. It comprises of two distinctive rituals namely 'Nagamandala' and 'Aashleshabali'.

Aati Kalenja: It is a traditional dance form that is basically performed during the rainy season to protect the village from all the evil spirits.

Karangolu: Karangolu is a traditional dance form that is performed by the members of the 'Harijan' community at the time of the second harvest in the months of February or March for the prosperity of the region and the well being of the people.

The **biennial 'Paryaya Festival' performed at the Udupi Krishna Temple** once in every two years on 18th January is one of the most important religious rituals. It is at this time the Puja rights and administration of the Krishna Temple are handed over from the Swamiji of one Matha to the Swamiji of the other Matha.

Madhvacharya and his philosophy of Dvaita:

- Madhvacharya was **born in 1238 AD to a Vaishnavite Brahmin** family in Karnataka.
- His childhood name was **Vasudeva**, later became famous as **Purnaprajana** and finally Madhvacharya.
- He became a monk in his teenage years and **went to Dwaraka** in Gujarat and accepted **Chitra Preksha as his Guru**.
- There he **studied the Advaita literature** and Upanishads.
- However, he wasn't convinced with the dual principles and philosophy of 'God and human soul' are the same.
- He left the monastery and **founded the Dvaita school of Vedanta** and called the philosophy as '**Tattvavada**'.
- His analysis on holy books of Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads and Brahman Sutras has been written in the Sanskrit Language as 37 books. which are famous as **Anuvyakhyana**, which was composed in poetic version.
- His ideas were different to Adi Shankara's Advaita Vedanta and Ramanuja's Vishishtadvaita philosophy.
- He travelled through India to propagate the philosophy Dvaita Vedanta and **in 1285 AD** he came to Udupi and established **ashta mathas** (eight monasteries).

They are: **Pejavara, Palimaru, Adamaru, Puttige, Sodhe, Kaniyooru, Shirur, Krishnapura**

- For each of the eight mathas, he appointed one of his direct disciples to be the first Swami, head of the matha.
- After him his **disciples** Jayatirtha, Vadiraja Tirtha, Raghavendra Tirtha and Vyasatirth spread the philosophy of Dvaita Vedanta.
- Another 24 mathas were also established throughout India.
- The monks in the temple learn the **Paryaya system introduced by Madhvacharya**.
- All the monasteries follow the traditions and rituals, which were written by Madhvacharya in **Tantrasara**.

- Madhvacharya **disappeared in 1317 AD in Udupi.**

Shri Madhvacharya's Nine Teachings

1. Bhagavan Shri Krishna alone is the Supreme Absolute Truth.
2. He is the object of knowledge in all the Vedas.
3. The universe is real, satya.
4. The differences between Ishvara (God), Jiva (soul) and Matter are real.
5. Jiva souls are by nature the servants of the Supreme Lord Hari.
6. There are two categories of jivas – liberated and illusioned.
7. Liberation (moksha) means entering an eternal relationship of service to the Supreme Lord.
8. Pure devotional service to Krishna is the only way to attain this liberation.
9. The truth may be known by pratyaksha (direct perception), anumana (inference or logic), sabda (spiritual sound or Vedic authority).

Carnatic music and its association with Udupi (Haridasa movement):

- The Haridasa devotional movement **originated in Karnataka** after Madhvacharya and spread to eastern states such as Bengal and Assam of medieval India.
- It was ushered in by the Haridasas and **took shape during the 13th and 14th centuries**, prior to and during the early rule of the Vijayanagara empire.
- The **main objective of this movement** was to propagate the Dvaita philosophy of Madhvacharya to the masses through a **literary medium known as Dasa Sahitya.**
- The Haridasas were saints who considered themselves as **slaves of their supreme lord – Hari.**
- The movement was a **net result of earlier devotional movements** such as the **Veerashaiva movement of Vachana**

literature in Karnataka led by Basavanna (12th century) and the **Alvar saints of Tamil Nadu** (10th century).

- Prominent Hindu philosophers, poets and scholars such as Sripadaraya, Vyasathirtha, Vadirajatirtha, Purandara Dasa and Kanaka Dasa played an important role during this time.
- Later, **Vallabhacharya in Gujarat and Guru Chaitanya** were influenced by the teachings of Madhvacharya.
- Their devotees started the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (**ISKCON**) – **known as the Hare Krishna Movement**.
- The Haridasa movement developed the **Carnatic music tradition** as a distinct art form from the Hindustani style.
- **Purandara Dasa**, one of the foremost of Haridasas' is known as the "**Father of carnatic music**" composed several Kirtane.
- Apart from Purandara Dasa, several later Haridasas' composed songs adhering to the same musical and philosophical traditions which fell in one of the **following categories**: Padagalu (devotional hymns), Kriti, Ugabhoga, Suladi, Vruttanama, Dandaka, Tripadi, Pattadi, Sangathya and Ragale.
- The tradition was elaborated and perfected by the **Trinity of Carnatic music** (Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri).

Essential characters of Carnatic music:

The main emphasis in Carnatic tradition is on **vocal music** and most **compositions are written to be sung**. It rests on **four main elements**.

Shruti: It refers to **musical pitch**. It is the note from which all the others are derived.

Swara: It refers to a type of musical sound that is a single

note, which **defines a relative (higher or lower) position of a note**, rather than a defined frequency. Swaras also refer to the solfege of Carnatic music, which consist of **seven notes**, **“sa-ri-ga-ma-pa-da-ni”**.

Raga system: A raga prescribes **a set of rules for building a melody**. It specifies rules for movements up (aarohanam) and down (avarohanam), the scale of which notes should figure more and which notes should be used more sparingly etc...

Ragas may be divided into **two classes:**

- *Janaka ragas* (i.e. melakarta or parent ragas)
- *Janya ragas* (descendant ragas of a particular janaka raga)

Tala system: Tala refers to a **fixed time cycle set for a particular composition**, which is built from groupings of beats. Talas have cycles of a defined number of beats and **rarely change within a song**. They have specific components, which in **combinations can give rise to over 108 varieties** allowing different compositions to have different rhythms.