



## LESSER-KNOWN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF INDIA

### KARNATAKA

#### Introduction

India has a rich tradition in music. It is imbued with different types of styles, forms and genres. The musical instruments play a great role in enhancing the quality of these music styles. Let us explore some of the unique musical instruments of Karnataka.

#### Maddale

It is a type of a percussion musical instrument belonging to Karnataka. It is played essentially as an accompaniment during Yakshgana performance. Though it looks like Mridangam but in terms of its structure, playing technique and acoustics, it is comparatively different. Unlike percussion instruments like Mridangam and the Tabla, Maddale produces tonic (shruti swara) when tapped either on the rim or on the ink. Maddale is available in three types of variations. Its drumhead is similar to the drumheads of the Tabla and the entire structure resembles to Pakhavaj. It's primarily built of wood of jackfruit tree but sometimes even woods of Kakke, Baine and Hunaalu are used.



#### Physical components

Maddale is a double-sided drum. The body is called Goodu. The drumhead is known as Muchchige. The two ends of the



drum are covered with the skin of goat and are laced with leather straps around the surface of the drum. These leather straps tightly hold the drumheads on either side. Remarkably the left side of the Maddale is always bigger in proportion to the right side as it helps producing bass (eda muchchige) while right side (smaller drumhead) producing treble (bala muchchige). The left side is smeared with a paste of ash and rice (bona). The instrument is tuned according to the Yakshagana singer before the act.

## **Dollu**

Dollu is another percussion instrument which has its origins in Karnataka. Its drumhead is built from either goat or sheep skin. Its entire frame is carved out of mango tree. Dollu is a heavy instrument and creates a thunderous sound when struck. The history of its origin is taken back to the times of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.



## ***DID YOU KNOW???***

According to one myth, once Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati laid a bet that whoever would lose the bet would have to leave Kailasa and return to earth and live anonymously. When Shiva lost the bet he did as decided and started living in a cave in the form of a stone. But after sometime, Parvati started feeling restless to run the world order without Shiva's support. Therefore, she sent for Lord Vayu in search of her consort. Here on earth, his devotee Mayamurthi guarded Shiva's cave. When Vayu too failed in his attempt to search for Shiva, he gave up. Then Narada was sent for the job. Upon locating the cave where Shiva was residing, Narada killed Mayamurthi and forced Shiva to return to his heavenly abode. However, Shiva was saddened by the death of his trusted aide Mayamurthi and didn't feel like leaving his mortal remains on earth. So he made a Dollu out of the dead body and carried it to Kailasa. Thus one of the main reasons for Shaivaites to play this instrument is due to this myth attached to the origin of Dollu.

## **Chande**

Chande is a drum typically played during the Yakshagana theatre performance in Karnataka. It follows the Yakshagana tala system. It is widely used in the traditional and classical music tradition of



South India. The rhythmic pattern is based on pre-classical music forms drawing its inspiration mainly from Carnatic music and to some extent from Hindustani music. Two variants in form of Badagu Thittu Chande (Northern school) and Thenku Thittu Chande (Southern school) are popular. According to Indian mythology, Chande was used as an instrument played at the beginning of a war. In many ancient sculptures, paintings and legends it is been depicted in war scenes. Its acoustics are such that the sound of this instrument can be heard from a distance of more than three kms. Its official record traces its use to be as late as 150 years. It is built out of wood of Jackfruit tree. Its drumhead is made of skin of cow. There are in total 12 hinges using thick ropes that hold onto the drumhead. A tubular wooden wedge is tied on the drumhead to facilitate tuning to an octave above the singer's tone. It is played using two sticks (chande kolu) made of bamboo. Both sticks vary in length. It is never kept on the ground straight but always in a slanting position.

### ACTIVITY

**1. What is the difference between Maddale and Pakhavaj? State any two differences.**

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**2. How is Dollu associated with Lord Shiva?**

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**3. Make a sketch of Chenda in the space provided below.**



#### CREDITS:

<http://www.thebetterindia.com/26502/indian-musical-instruments/><https://www.quora.com/What-are-some-lesser-known-Indian-musical-instruments/><http://www.thebetterindia.com/26502/indian-musical-instruments/>