

THE COMPLETE KRITIS OF
ŚRĪ TYĀGARĀJA

Compiled by
Maddali Venkata Subbayya

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A SHORT HISTORY OF ŚRĪ TYĀGARĀJA

Though the history of Śrī Tyāgarājaswami is familiar to most music lovers, it would be appropriate to narrate briefly a few historical facts for the convenience of all the readers of this book. More detailed narrations are available in plenty and in particular, the result of the research of Dr. Bill Jackson on Tyāgarāja will well repay the interest of seekers by giving an objective and respectful researcher's narration of Tyāgayya's life. Another authoritative source would be Professor P. Sambamurthy's biography of Tyāgarāja.

Tyāgabrahmam's great grandfather Kākarla Pancanada Brahmam, a *vaidiki brāhmin* of Mulakanāḍu sect migrated from the Cumbum taluk of Kurnool district in Andhra Pradesh and settled at Tiruvārūr in Tānjōre district of Tamilnāḍu. He was a scholar well-versed in *Vedas*, *śāstras* and *purāṇās*. He had five sons of whom the last was Girirāja Brahmam. Girirāja Brahmam became the āsthāna vidwān in the court of the Marātha king at Tānjōre. His son Rāmabrahmam had three sons, with his wife Sitamma: Japēśa or Pancapakēśa Brahmam, Rāmanātha Brahmam and Tyāgarāja Brahmam. Tradition says that the local deity, Tyāgarājaswāmi appeared to the couple in their dream and told them to name the last child after him. He also predicted that this child would be great vāggēyakāra.

Tyāgabrahmam (Tyāgarāja) was born in the year 1767 A.D. corresponding to the Indian calendar year Sarvajit, in the month of Vaiśākh, śukla ṣaṣṭi.

The family deity was Śrīrāma and from his childhood, Tyāgarāja was a devotee of Śrīrāma. In his childhood, his mother immersed him in devotional music, teaching him Bhadrācala Rāmadāsa kīrtanas, Jayadēva's aṣṭapadis