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The book titled "**Korvais made easy**" by M N Hariharan was brought to my attention. At a cursory glance of the book, I could notice that the approach to the subject was highly scientific. Scientific approach is a qualification that is prominent by its absence in the field of music.

Almost all veterans in the field had been pitifully lacking in general education, and scientific analysis of anything was extremely rare. Added to this grave malady, our veterans had unshakable faith in what was transmitted to them by their Gurus who were equally illiterate and the sishyas refused to listen to any reasoning or scientific analysis of any aspect of Carnatic music, be it the grammar of *Rāgams*, lyric or *Layam* aspects. In this environment, the *Layam* aspects suffered the most.

Elucidating these matters and bringing them within the reasoning power of the common man can be attempted only in this generation, when the general literacy level among artists and listeners is of a healthy level. Printed material can supplement this effort and the book "**Korvais made easy**" is an appreciable venture in this direction. Any person with a moderate level of general education can understand and be benefitted by this book.

The author, M N Hariharan is a dedicated Mridangist, and only such a person can implicate this arduous task. I have requested him to annex a chapter of *Korvais* that could be used by vocalists, and this would make the book, one of comprehensive utility. This is in fact the first venture of making the mysteries of *Layam* understandable to the common man. I recommend publication of the book and wide distribution of the same.

My best wishes to Hariharan.

T R Subramanyam
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Mannargudi A Easwaran

I have known M N Hariharan for several years. I am very proud that he is working in the field of *Layam* with great interest and dedication. He is still working on many other aspects of *Layam*.

This book “**Korvais made easy**”, written by him, is a unique one, and is the first of its kind. It makes easy the composition of *Korvais* for any *Thālam*, any *Nadai* and for any *Edam* or *Eduppu*. It is useful, not only to percussion artists, but also to vocalists, violinists, etc. and to all music lovers and students. There are many books on *Layam*, but they all deal about *Layam* in general. This book deals entirely and elaborately about *Korvais* and is to the point.

In addition to the five basic *Nadais*, this book also deals with *Thrishra Mael Kālam* and *Chaturshra Mael Kālam*. Using various combinations of these *Nadais*, 343 ways of playing *Korvais* have been shown. There is also a table which enables us to play in *Trikālam*.

Hariharan has included a separate section on *Thālam*s with total count not a multiple of 1 *Aksharam*. For example, 1 1/2 *Aksharam* (*Thrishra Chāpu*), 2 1/2 *Aksharam* (*Khanda Chāpu*), 3 1/2 *Aksharam* (*Mishra Chāpu*), 4 1/2 *Aksharam* (*Sankīrna Chāpu*), 10 1/2 *Aksharam*, 13 1/2 *Aksharam*, 17 1/2 *Aksharam Thālam*s, etc. These tables can be used in *Sandha Thālam*s. For example, the *Thiruppugazh* ‘*Kādhi Modhi*’ has a total count of $1\frac{1}{2} + 1\frac{1}{2} + 2\frac{1}{2} + 5 = 10\frac{1}{2}$ *Aksharam* = 42 *Māthirai*.

For these *Thālam*s, the *Nadais* that have been considered are *Chaturshram*, *Thrishra Mael Kālam* and *Chaturshra Mael Kālam*. For example, the artist can play the *Korvai* all three times in *Chaturshram*, or twice in *Chaturshram* and once in *Thrishra Mael Kālam*, or once in *Chaturshram*, the second time in *Thrishra Mael Kālam*, and the third time in *Chaturshra Mael Kālam*, etc.

He has demonstrated to me several examples and they are all really aesthetic. I have also verified them to be correct. Given such a great resource to easily compute the *Alavu* of *Korvais*, it is left to the artist’s *Manobhavam* to use this and make the concert a success.

I am very much impressed with this effort, and wish Hariharan all success.

Mannargudi A Easwaran

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