

RĀGA PARAS/PARAJU IN THE COMPOSITIONS OF SRI MUTHUSWĀMY DĪKṢITAR AND SYĀMA SĀSTRĪ AS SEEN IN SAṄGĪTA SAMPRADĀYA PRADARSHINI

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Abstract

Mayamalavagaula is one of the oldest rāga -s in the Karnataka saṅgīta system having many janya raga-s. Rāga Paras, synonymous with Paraju Pharaju and Paruju is a prominent janya rāga of Mālavagauḷa sharing the same ārohaṇ a and avarōhaṇa . Over the years , the rāga has evolved into one with a different scale . This work aims to study the compositions of Muthuswāmy Dikṣitar and Syāma Sāstri in Saṅgītasampradāyapradarshini and analyse the features of the rāga as seen in the kṛti-s and their renditions in the present times.

Keywords:

Paras, Bhāṣāṅga Saṅgītasampradāyapradarshini, Muthuswamy Dikṣitar, Syāma Sāstri

Introduction

What differentiate Indian music from other systems of music is the rāga system. It is a concept that makes this music unique.

Rāga is an abstract term . There are many interpretations for the term rāga by different authors at different point of time . Earliest reference is Mataṅga of Brhaddēsi who says a rāga is one which is pleasing to listen and the latest, Professor P Sambamurthi explains rāga thus: “rāga-s are aesthetic facts that can be perceived by trained ears. It is the horizontal arrangement of particular tones and semi tones in conformity to recognised aesthetic laws that establish the form of the rāga”. To put it simple a rāga is a melodic entity with a prescribed scale called ārohaṇa and avarōhaṇa and distinguished through the oscillations called gamaka -s, special phrases unique to that rāga and the prominent note or swara pertaining to it.

Classification of rāga -s under 72 mēlakarta scheme is systematic and scientific . Such a classification facilitated creation of new rāga-s. Many rāga-s were in existence for centuries even before 72 melakarta scheme came into practice. Some of them retained their prominence and some were lost during the course of time.

Musical forms emerged more popular in the post trinity period . The most prominent musical form Kṛti has made the older forms like Prabandha -s redundant. The trinity of Carnatic music enriched existing and new rāga-s through their magnificent compositions in kṛti form.

Rāgāṅga rāga system propounded by Venkatamaki was followed by Sri Muthuswamy Dikṣitar in his compositions . Sri Tyagaraja followed 72 melakarta scheme of Govindārcārya . Sīyama sāstri had composed mainly in rāga -s prominent during his period although there were compositions in lesser known rāga like Kalgada and Chintamani.

Scope

This study will focus on the compositions of Sri Muthuswamy Dikṣitar and Sri Syāma sāstri in rāga Paras /Paraju given in the treatise Saṅgītasampradāyapradarshini . Melodic aspects of the compositions will be analyzed and the oral tradition followed in rendering these compositions are studied to understand the similarities and differences between lakṣya and



lakṣaṇa

Analysis

Lakṣaṇa of the rāga

Rāga Paraja /Paras/ Paraju/Paruju/ finds its place as a janya of 15th Mēla Māyāmālavagaula in many lakṣaṇa garantha -s like Rāgamala , Rāgavibodha (RV), Rāgalakṣana of Muddu Venkatamakhi (RL-MV), Saṅgrahacūdāmaṇi, SangitaSarasangraha, Mahābharatacūdāmaṇi and Saṅgītasampradāyapradarshini (SSP).

Lakṣaṇa for this rāga mentioned across various treatises are as follows

Janya of 15th mēla Māyāmālavagaula

Sampūrna Rāga

Ārohaṇa S R G M P D N S

Avarōhaṇa S N D P M G R S

All except RL- MV and RV mention Ṣaḍja as nyāsa amśa and graha svara for this rāga.

As per RL-MV gāndhāra is the nyāsa amśa and jīva svara and Ṣaḍja as graha svara

As per RV gāndhāra is the amśa and graha and ṣaḍja as nyāsa svara.

Some svara passages are given to illustrate the importance of ga in both the treatises

It is mentioned in all treatises that it can be sung at any time of the day.

RL-MV mentions this rāga as a bhāṣāṅga and a dēsiya rāga.

Pharaju in Saṅgītasampradāyapradarshini

Following footsteps of RL -MV, the author describes the rāga as janya of the 15th mēla māyāmālavagaula, Bhāṣāṅga, Sampūrna, Ṣaḍja graha, Dēsiya Rakti rāga suitable for singing all times. He mentions that gāndhāra is the jīva amśa and nyāsa svara . Some svara phrases are given to highlight the importance of gāndhāra . It is also mentioned that one does not observe sancāra -s below mandra niṣāḍa and above tāra gāndhāra in this rāga

In this treatise two kṛti-s of Muthuswāmy Dīkṣitar and one kṛti of Syāma Sastri are given .

They are

1.Sri Śukra Bhagavantam - Sri Muthuswamy Dikṣitar - Khanda Ata

The kṛti starts with tāra Ṣaḍja as graha svara.

pdś and gmd are typically observed throughout Pallavi

An unusual rṣṅ is also observed

In Pallavi itself all three sthāyi-s are covered

Anupallavi begins with Pancama

vādi- samvādi P-Ś is seen

Melody extends to tāra gāndhāra

Anupallavi concludes with a madhyama kāla sāhitya

Carana begins with pancama

Unusual phrases like pmd pdpś are observed.

Carana also concludes with a madhyamakāla sāhitya with octave shift of sss śśn in the beginning and unusual dPn as the ending phrase.

2.Cintayē Mahāliṅgamūrtim - Sri Muthuswāmy Dikṣitar - Ādi

The composition begins with pancama - starting phrase is daivata varjya P nś

In the Pallavi, dhātu phrases like rṣṅ and dpdm are observed

Anupallavi starts with dhātu phrase S gr

Some varjya phrases g m D and P n ś are seen here

Anupallavi concludes with a madhyamakāla sāhitya where tāra gāndhāra is observed .

Carana commences with pancama



For the first time the svara-s s r g m p are seen in order but phrase is arranged as sRgMp
Carana concludes with a madhyamakāla sāhitya which has dhātu phrases like ng̃R̃ and

ŚnR̃

3. Trilōka māta nannu - Sri Syāma Sāstri - Ādi

Kṛti starts with the phrase s G m

Phrase g m g m is observed in Pallavi

vādi-samvādi p ś is seen in Pallavi in this composition also

Anupallavi begins after one akṣara with daivata being the only svara for the entire laghu

Octave shift of Ś s is seen along with g m g m as seen in Pallavi

Anupallavi concludes with maṇḍra sthāyi niṣāda

There are three carana-s for this kṛti all beginning with niṣāda

Phrase m n d m omitting pancama bring a different shade to the rāga

Carana too ends with maṇḍra niṣāda as r ṇ omitting ṣaḍja

Findings

- This rāga is mentioned as a bhāṣāṅga rāga in Saṅgīta Sampradāya Pradarshini though there is no mention of anya svara . Compositions given in SSP too do not have anya svara . Smt T Brinda who belongs to śishya parampara of Syāma Sāstri has rendered another kṛti of Syama Sastri Nīlāyadākṣi in the same rāga with the occasional use of chatuśruti daivata as anya svara . This rāga can still be considered as bhāṣāṅga rāga as per the lakshya ; to quote Subbarama Dīkṣitar , “the features of the rāga are to be grasped as per the lakṣya”
- In SSP, the ārohaṇa and avarōhaṇa are given as that of 15th mēḷa Māyāmālavagaula but presently the scale for this rāga is mentioned as sgmpdns - sndpmgrs in many works like Rāganidhi (v3-1965:219). In the notations as seen in SSP , this rāga is distinguished from Māyamālavagaula through many phrases like dpdś mdś ndś mndś and so on . Varjya (omission of a svara) phrases and dhātu (jumping svara-s) phrases are more prominent than phrases with orderly movement (kramathva) in this rāga . Hence by assigning a different scale such unique phrases are lost and presently this rāga is sung within the restrictive new scale .
- In Muthuswamy Diksitar compositions we come across rare srgmp as in and

In both cases it is observed that there is accent to gāndhara in the first phrase and riṣabha and madhyama in the second. Such a phrase is one time occurrence in the composition.

This phrase is not found in Syāma sāstri’s kṛti as the ascend is s G m p d n ś as seen in the notation in SSP.

- Following lakṣaṇa , sancāra-s are not seen above tāra sthāyi gāndhara and below maṇḍra sthāyi niṣāda in the notations given in SSP . Presently these compositions are rendered with sancāra-s reaching tāra madhyama
- Octave shift of Ṣaḍja s ś and other alamkara -s like gmgmp rrgm and pdpdm are observed in the compositions
- Kṛti Cintayē mahālinga is ornamented with svarākṣara sāhitya
- Muthuswamy Dīkṣitar in his compositions used sama kāla dwikāla and trikāla phrases. For example

whereas in Syāma sāstri’s kṛti, the format resembles that of a kṛti set in akṣara



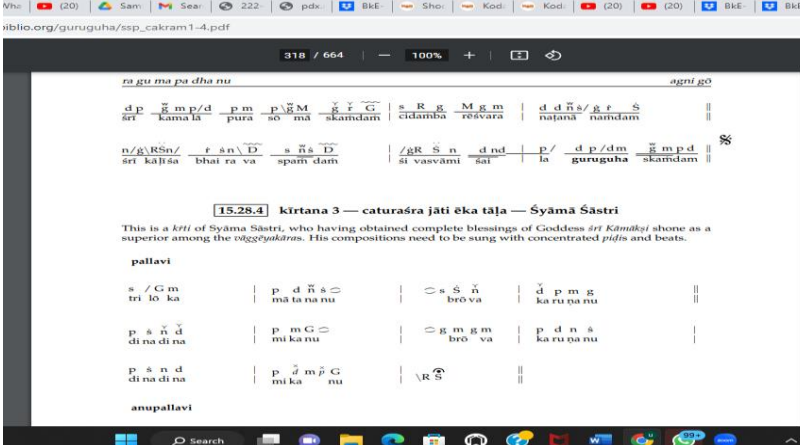
kāla

- All gamaka -s like Kampita sphurita Pratyāghāta nokku odukkal orikkai etrajāru and irakkajāru are mentioned along with the anuswaram in the notations
- Trilōka māta nannu is rendered presently in cāpu tāḷa by some school of musicians

Conclusion

In the SSP, only two kṛti -s of Dikṣitar and one kṛti of Syāma Sāstri are given . We come across two more kṛti -s each of Dikṣitar and Syāma sāstri in other work s. There are also many other compositions in this rāga by composers like Maharaja Svāti Tirunal , Ūthukkādu Venkatasubbaiyer and later composers like Poochi Srinivāsa Iyengar . Presence of many compositions in this rāga suggest that this rāga is unique though it shares the same scale as that of its janaka rāga . The differences are revealed by phrases unique to it and aesthetic beauty created by these phrases.

Appendix



ra gu ma pa dha nu agni go

d p kama lā pura sō mā skandam s R g cidamba M g m rēsvara d d ṅ s / ḡ r Ṣ

n / ḡ R Ṣ n / f ā n \ D s ṅ s D / ḡ R Ṣ n d nd p / d p / d m ḡ m p d

ṛi ka jēsa bhat ra va spaṅ dam śi vasvāmi śar la guruguha skandam

[15.28.4] kīrtana 3 — caturaṣra jāti eka tāḷa — Śyāma Sāstri

This is a *kṛti* of Śyāma Sāstri, who having obtained complete blessings of Goddess *śrī Kāmākṣī* shone as a superior among the *vijayāhāras*. His compositions need to be sung with concentrated *piḷai* and beats.

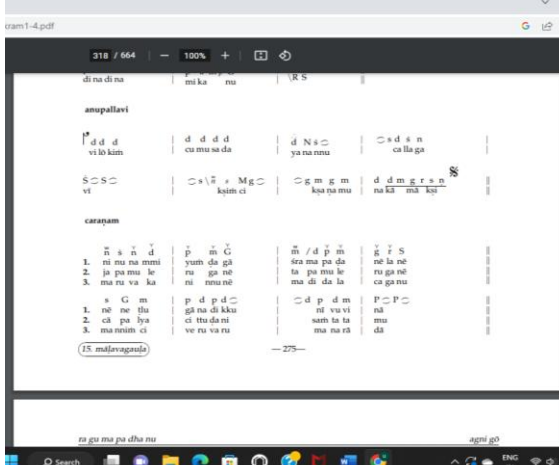
pallavi

s / G m tri lō ka p d ṅ s ma ta na nu o s ṅ bro va d p m g ka ru ga nu

p ā ṅ di na di na p m G mi ka nu g m g m bro va p d n ā ka ru na nu

p ā n d di na di na p d m p G mi ka nu \ R

anupallavi



di na di na mi ka nu \ R S

anupallavi

d d d vi lō kin d d d cu mu sa da d N s ya na nu d s n ca lā ga

ś o s vi s + Mg o g m g m d d m g r s n

ka jē sa kē na mu na kā mā kē

caranam

ṅ n d p m G ṅ / d p m ṅ r S

1. ni na nu mmi yuth da gā śra mu pa da ne la ne
2. ja pa mu le ru ga ne ta pa mu le ru ga ne
3. ma ru va ka ni manē ma di da la ca ga nu

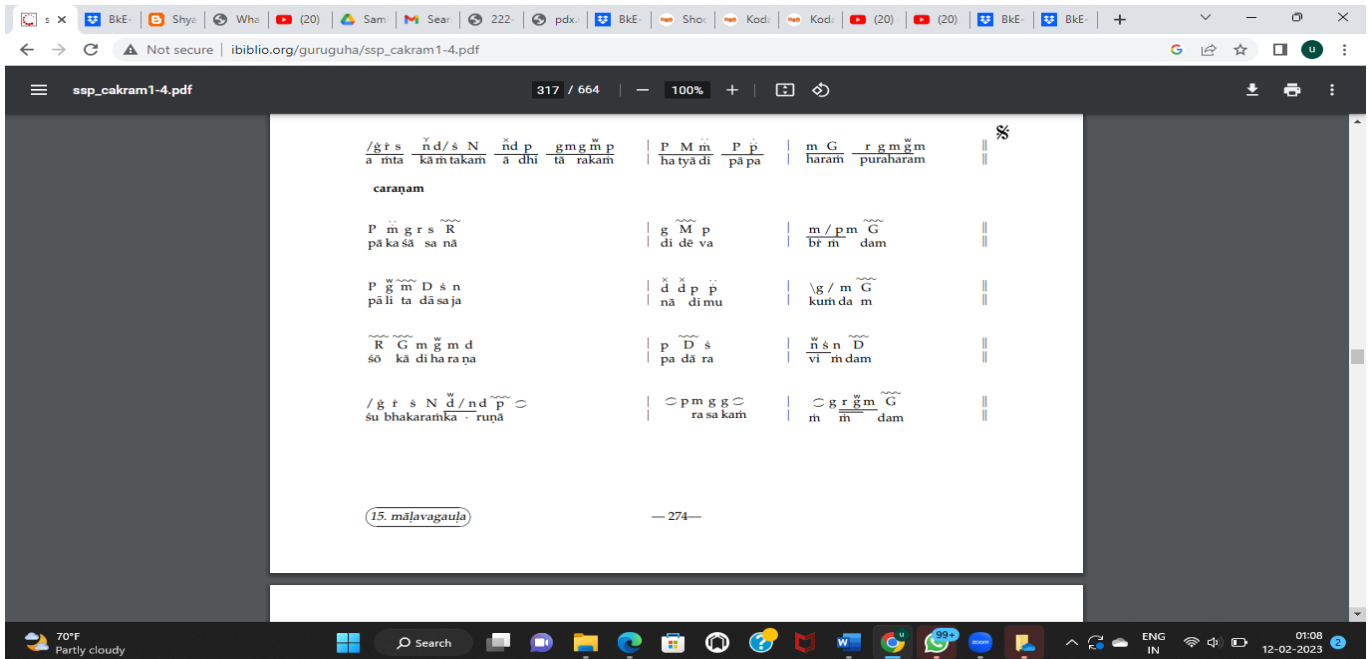
s G m p d p d d d p d m p P

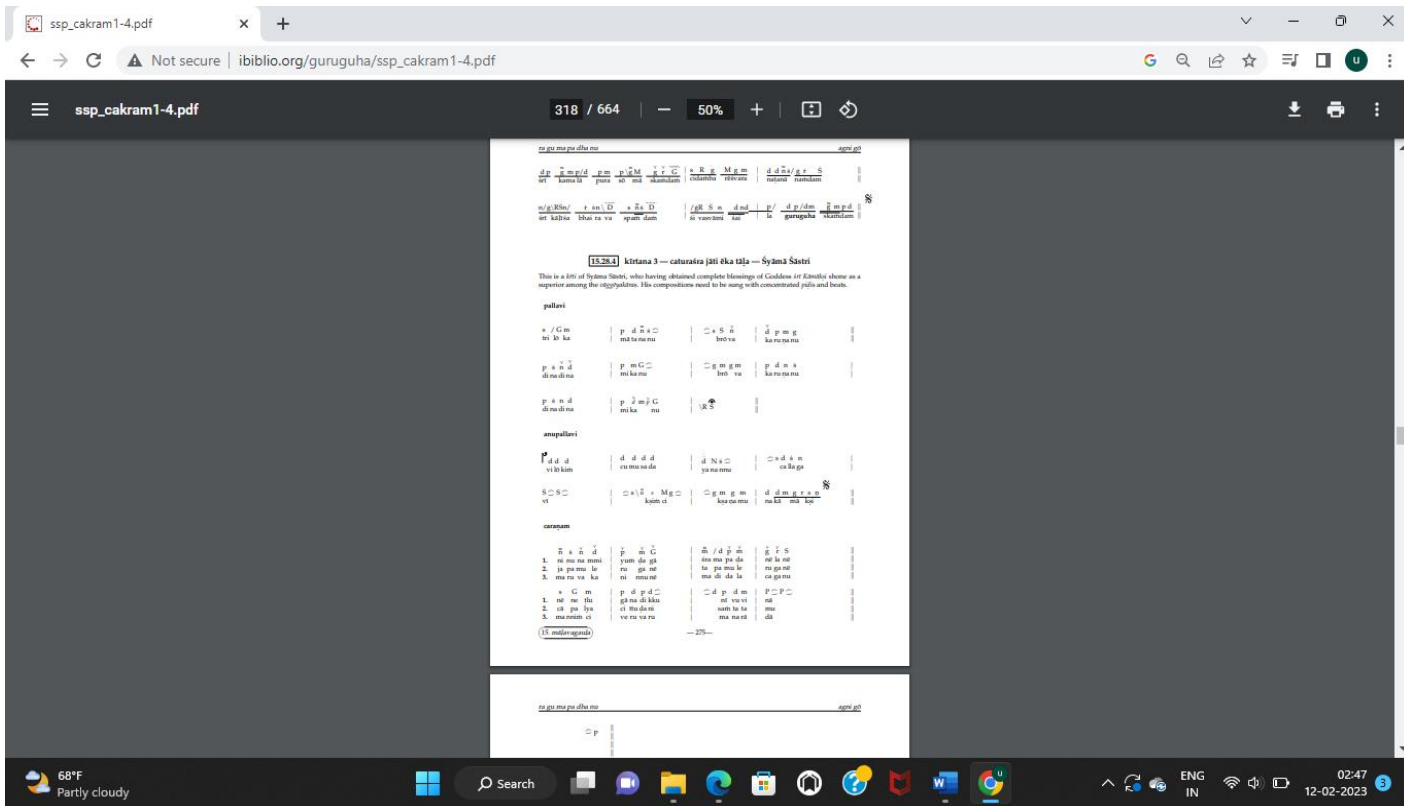
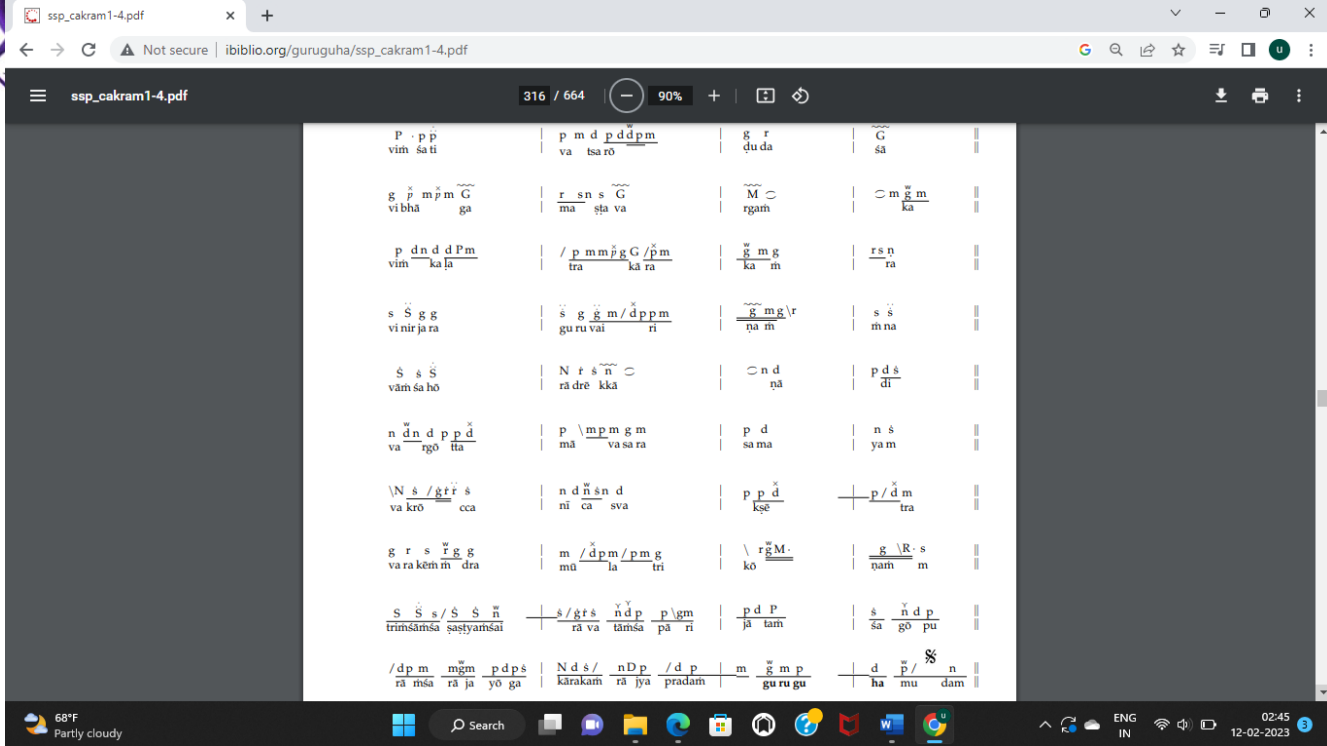
1. ne ne lu gā na di kku ni vu vi hā
2. cā pa bya cī tu da mi sarb ta ta mu
3. mā neim cī ve ru va ru ma na rā dā

[15. māvāgāla]

ra gu ma pa dha nu agni go







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