

Variations In Notations Of The Ghana Rāga Pañcaratna Kīrtana-S Of Tyāgarāja In The Early Publications

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Abstract:

The compositions of Tyāgarāja, one among the Karnāṭak Music Trinity came into practice during the early part of the 20th century and it is seen that many of the early publications (publications that came before 1940 contain the text and notations of many of his compositions. While studying the notations seen in these publications, it is observed that many of the compositions that are in vogue have undergone many changes and the variations are seen with regard to the name of the rāga, tāla and also the text and the melody. The ghana rāga Pañcaratna kīrtana-s of Tyāgarāja are globally acclaimed kīrtana-s that are being rendered as a group in the ārādhāna celebrations of the composer. The documented versions of these kīrtana-s and the prevalent versions as seen today have variations and this article highlights the variations seen within the publications and also with that seen in current practice. This article has one annexure that gives the list of the early publications that contain the text and the notations of the pañcaratna kīrtana-s.

Keywords: Pancaratna kirtana-s, Tyagaraja, raga, early publications, Karnatak music.

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I. Introduction

In South Indian Music, the repertoire is passed on to the generations predominantly through the oral tradition. The oral tradition refers to the learning of the compositions from a guru or the teacher to the śiṣya or the disciple. This tradition has been in vogue for several centuries and till date. Apart from this, the compositions have been documented in the form of notations in the palm leaf and paper manuscripts. During the second half of the 19th century, the books containing the text, notation of the compositions came into vogue and it is seen that the compositions include the Svarāvali-s or the svara exercises, gīta-s, varṇa-s, kīrtana-s of the Music trinity and other composers and other musical forms. The first book containing the compositions is the Saṅgīta-sarvārtha sāra-saṅgrahamu (Telugu) of Vīṇa Rāmānuja published in the year 1857. Many books were published after this and it is seen that till 1940, there are approximately 30 books in Telugu and 20 books in Tamiz which contain the notations for the Varṇa-s and text and notations of the Kīrtana-s. Even though there were composers before the Music Trinity, who have composed the kīrtana-s, the publications predominantly contain the kīrtana-s of the Music Trinity and in particular Tyāgarāja. These publications are referred to as ‘early publications’ⁱ and it is seen that there are variations with regard to the name of the rāga, tāla, sāhitya and the melody (in the notations) with regard to the compositions. It is seen that till 1940, around 585 compositions of Tyāgarāja are available and out of which around 200 compositions are available with notation. In the present day, around 400 compositions are in practice and it can be said that these compositions came into practice after 1940 in the oral as well as textual tradition. As mentioned earlier, there are variations with regard to the sāhitya and melody of the compositions in particular, the ghana rāga pañcaratna kīrtana-s of Tyāgarāja among the publications and also with regard to the current practice. This paper is a study of such variations seen with regard to the ghana rāga pañcaratna kīrtana-s of Tyāgarāja as seen in the early publications.

II. Pañcaratna Kīrtana-S Of Tyāgarāja

As mentioned earlier, various kinds of musical forms are in vogue in Karnāṭak Music and of which the kīrtana or the kṛti is a predominantly used form particularly in concerts. The term ‘pañcaratna’ refers to ‘five gems’ and it is seen that the groups of five kīrtana-s composed by Tyāgarāja are referred to as ‘Pañcaratna kīrtana-s’. It is seen that the pañcaratna kīrtana-s are generally known by the kṣētra or the place on which it is composed. The pañcaratna kīrtana-s of Tyāgarāja on kṣētra are as follows:

- Kōvūr Pañcaratna – On Lord Sundarēsa of Kōvūr temple (near Chennai)
- Śrīraṅga Pañcaratna – On Lord Raṅganātha of Śrīraṅgam
- Tiruvōṛṇiyūr Pañcaratna – On Goddess Tripurasundari of Tiruvōṛṇiyūr temple
- Lālguḍi Pañcaratna – On both the God and Goddess of Lālguḍi temple

It has to be noted that the term 'pañcaratna' has not been mentioned by Tyāgarāja and it is only the later scholars who use this term to denote the group of five kīrtana-s. It is also mentioned that Tyāgarāja was the first composer to compose the pañcaratna kīrtana-s which has been followed by later composers. It is observed that Tyāgarāja was an ardent devotee of Lord Rāma and hence, the kīrtana-s on other deities and particularly the group of five kīrtana-s are referred to as 'Pañcaratna kīrtana-s' with the prefix of the name of the place such as Kōvūr, Śrīraṅgam, Lālgudi and Tiruvorriyūr. There are compositions on other deities such as Muruga, Varadarāja, but since the available kīrtana-s are less than five, they have not been classified as a group.

III. Ghana Rāga Pañcaratna Kīrtana-S

The ghana rāga Pañcaratna Kīrtana-s are a group of five kīrtana set to the rāga-s Nāṭa, Gauḷa, Ārabhi, Varāḷi and Śrī. The five compositions are as follows:

1. Jagadānanda kāraka – Nāṭa – Ādi
2. Duḍukugala – Gauḷa – Ādi
3. Sādīncanē – Ārabhi – Ādi
4. Kanakanarucirā – Varāḷi – Ādi
5. Endarōmahānubhāvulu – Śrī – Ādi

These five kīrtana-s are performed during the annual Ārādhana celebrations of Tyāgarāja at Tiruvaiyāru and also at many places in India as well as abroad during the ārādhana celebrations. It is customary to render these compositions in a group, where the Vidvān-s of Vocal (Male and female), Violin, Vīṇa, Mṛdaṅgam, Ghaṭam, Kañjirā and Mōrsing perform together. The five kīrtana-s have both svara and sāhitya for the caraṇa-sunlike the other pañcaratna kīrtana-s and while rendering these compositions, the svara of each caraṇa is rendered followed by the sāhitya.

Before going into the study of the ghana rāga pañcaratna kīrtana-s, it is necessary to know what are ghana rāga-s.

IV. Ghana Rāga-S:

The term 'ghana' associated with a rāga is first seen in the Rāgalakṣaṇamu of Śāhaji (1684-1712), where the classification of rāga-s as ghana, naya and dēśi is seen and 61 rāga-s have been termed as ghana rāga-s. However, the reason for mentioning them as 'ghana' is not available in this work. The next work to mention the ghana rāga-s is the Rāgalakṣaṇam of Muddu Vēṅkaṭamakhi (later part of 18th century) where the classification of rāga-s into ghana, rakti and dēśiya is seen and ten rāga-s have been classified as ghana. This work also does not give the reason behind the classification. The next work to mention this type of classification is the Saṅgīta-sampradāya-pradarśini of Subbarāma Dīkṣita, published in the year 1904, where nine rāga-s have been classified as ghana. The definition for the ghana, naya and dēśiya rāga-s are seen in this work only, where it has been mentioned that the ghana rāga-s are suitable for rendering tāna (manōdharma aspect). Thus it can be seen that there has been a decline in the number of ghana rāga-s over a period.

It has to be noted that scholars like K V Śrīnivāsa Aiyāṅgār (while giving the text of pañcaratna kīrtana-s) and Sambamoorthy mention that the ghana rāga-s are five namely Nāṭa, Gauḷa, Ārabhi, Varāḷi and Śrī and Sambamoorthy further gives a list of five rāga-s referring to them as 'dvitīya ghana pañcaka' meaning 'second set of five ghana rāga-s'. Thus, it can be said that the grouping of the above mentioned five rāga-s as 'ghana pañcaka' is a much later concept and probably would have come into vogue because of the presence of the pañcaratna kīrtana-s of Tyāgarāja in these rāga-s.

With this brief overview of ghana rāga-s, the study of the variations seen in the notations of the Pañcaratna Kīrtana-s is taken up.

As mentioned earlier, the pañcaratna kīrtana-s are often performed in group apart from individual singing and the musicians adhere to the common version when singing in groups and while performing alone they follow their own tradition. Thus, it is observed that there are variations in the rendering of the compositions and let us see the reasons behind it.

In Karnāṭak Music, similar to the gharana-s of Hindustāni music, the term 'Pāṭāntara' is used where the term denotes the repertoire of one particular school. Since, the compositions were passed on to the next generations through oral traditions, the differences are seen with regard to each school. For instance, there were three prominent śiṣya parampara-sⁱⁱ of the disciples of Tyāgarāja that are as follows:

- Vālājāpet Parampara (Vālājāpet Vēṅkaṭaramaṇa Bhāgavata and his disciples)
- Tillaisthānam Parampara (Tillaisthānam Rāma Bhāgavata and his disciples)
- Umaiyālapuram Parampara (Umaiyālapuram Kṛṣṇa Bhāgavata and his disciples)

The variations in the Pāṭāntara are seen with regard to Rāga, Tāla, sāhitya and also saṅgati-s (variations in the melodic structure of a line of a composition). Many of the compositions rendered in these particular schools differ with regard to the rāga and also the melodic structure. For instance, the kīrtana Raghuvīra is seen in two rāga-s namely Husēni and Kharaharapriyā. Likewise, the rāga Bindumālīni is stated to be a janya of the 16th

mēḷakarta in the Vālājāpet parampara, whereas it has been mentioned as a janya of the 17th mēḷakarta Sūryakāntam in the Tillaisthānam parampara. Moreover, each parampara has a distinct repertoire and till the late 20th century, this was kept intact.

Now, the variations in the notations of the pañcaratna kīrtana-s as seen in the early publications is taken up.

As mentioned in the introduction, the compositions of Tyāgarāja are available with notation in the publications that came before 1940 and it is observed that there are variations with regard to the structure, melody and sāhitya of the Pañcaratna kīrtana-s. The publications that contain the text or the notations of the pañcaratna kīrtana-s have been tabulated and appended to this article.

V. Variations Seen In The Notations Of The Pañcaratna Kīrtana-S:

The list of publications in which the pañcaratna kīrtana-s are available has been tabulated and appended to this article (Annexure)

The term 'pañcaratna' with regard to these five kīrtana-s is first seen in the publication Saṅgītakalānidhi of Taccūru Brothers in the year 1912. Incidentally all the five kīrtana-s are first seen only in this publication. The next publication which mentions the term 'pañcaratna kṛti-s' is the Saṅgīta Sudhāmbudhi of K V Śrīnivāsa Ayyaṅgār in the year 1917. The book 'Śrī Tyāgarājasvāmivāri kīrtanalu' of S A Rāmasvāmi Aiyar published in the year 1933 also gives the notation for all the five kīrtana-s. Eventhough the 'Oriental Music in European Notation' of A M Cinnaśāmy Mudaliār is the first publication to give 'Jagadānandakāraka', only the Pallavi of this kīrtana is available. In the Saṅgīta-sampradāya-pradarśini of Subbarāma Dīkṣita, published in the year 1904, the notations for the kīrtana-s in the rāga-s Nāṭa, Gauḷa, Ārabhi and Śrī are available.

The order in which the five Kṛti-s are mentioned in these works is as follows:

1. Jagadānandakāraka – Nāṭa – Ādi
2. Duḍukugala – Gauḷa- Ādi
3. Sādīñcanē – Ārabhi – Ādi
4. Endarō mahānubhāvulu – Śrīrāga – Ādi
5. Kanakanarucirā – Varāḷi – Ādi

Except 'Kanakanarucirā', the notation is available for the other four kṛti-s in Saṅgītakalānidhi. It is to be noted that while rendering the five kīrtana-s, the Varāḷi kīrtana is rendered as the fourth one and the Śrīrāga kīrtana is rendered as the fifth and the final kīrtana.

Now, the variations in the kīrtana-s seen within the publications and also with regard to current practice are taken up. The order of the kīrtana-s is taken up in the order as seen in the publications.

Jagadānandakāraka- Nāṭa – Ādi

As mentioned earlier, this kīrtana is available in with all the carāṇa-s in four publications. However, in the Saṅgītakalānidhi eight carāṇa-s are available whereas Saṅgītasudhāmbudhi gives two more carāṇa-s. The publication 'Śrī Tyāgarājasvāmivāri kīrtanalu' of S A Rāmasvāmi Aiyar also gives ten carāṇa-s with notation, however the sequence of the carāṇa-s differs. The sequence of the carāṇa-s as seen in the earlier publications vary with that seen in current practice. Hence, it is not known as to when the current version of the kīrtana came into practice and who formulated it.

Duḍukugala – Gauḷa – Ādi

In this kīrtana, the variations are not seen with regard to the sequence of the carāṇa-s and the melodic structure. There are eight carāṇa-s available with notation in all the publications mentioned above except the book 'Śrī Tyāgarājasvāmivāri kīrtanalu' of S A Rāmasvāmi Aiyar. In this, there are nine carāṇa-s as seen in current practice. The additional carāṇa 'Śrī Vanitā hṛd kumudhābja Vāṅgmānasa gōcara' is seen as the first carāṇa in this publication. It is interesting to note that in the publications of K V Śrīnivāsa Aiyāṅgar give the sāhitya of the first carāṇa, however the notation is available only from the second carāṇa.

Another interesting aspect is the additional carāṇa is set in Samskr̥t, whereas all the other carāṇa-s are in Telugu. Moreover, the duration of the first carāṇa is of two āvarta-s and the that of the second and the fifth carāṇa-s are of one āvarta each. It is to be noted that the sāhitya of the first carāṇa is in praise of the Lord and the rest of the carāṇa-s describe the qualities of a human being who seeks refuge in the Almighty.

Thus, even though there is no variation with regard to the melodic structure of this kīrtana, the reason for the inclusion of the additional carāṇa could not be ascertained.

Sādiñcanē – Ārabhi – Ādi

There are no variations with regard to the melodic structure of this kīrtana either in the earlier publications or in the current practice. However, in the later publications, one additional caraṇa is seen but that is not sung during the ārādhana celebrations, but is seen in some other schools of thought.

Endarōmahānubhāvulu – Śrī – Ādi

In this kīrtana also, there are no variations with regard to the melodic structure in the notations documented in the publications and also with that seen in the current practice.

Kanakanarucirā – Varāḷi – Ādi

The notation for this kīrtana with all the caraṇa-s is first seen only in the book ‘Śrī Tyāgarājasvāmivāri kīrtanalu’ of S A Rāmasvāmi Aiyar (1933). The earliest publication to give this kīrtana is the Saṅgītasudhāmbudhi of K V Śrīnivāsa Aiyāṅgār in the year 1917. In this publication, the notation is available only for the Pallavi, Anupallavi and one caraṇa (Satatamu) and for the rest of the caraṇa-s, the text alone is available. Moreover, the sequence of the caraṇa-s differs from that seen in the present day.

In the Saṅgītakalānidhi of Taccūru Brothers, which is the first book to mention the term ‘ghana rāga pañcaratna kīrtana-s’, the notation for this kīrtana is not available but the text of only two caraṇa-s are given apart from Pallavi and Anupallavi.

In the Saṅgīta sudhāmbudhi, there is a note given by K V Śrīnivāsa Aiyāṅgār (p.246) where it is stated that after all the caraṇa-s are rendered with svara, the caraṇa ‘Kalakalamanu’ is rendered followed by ‘Satatamu’. This seems to be interesting because the caraṇa ‘Kalakalamanu’ is seen in the earlier publication ‘Saṅgītakalānidhi’ whereas the other caraṇa-s are not available. Moreover, the notation or the svara-s for the other caraṇa-s are not available in this publication, but the note mentions the term ‘svara sāhitya-s’.

There is a variation seen with regard to the sāhitya ‘kalakalamanu’, the second svara sāhitya in the present day. In the book ‘Śrī Tyāgarājasvāmivāri Kīrtanalu’ this has been given as ‘Taḷataḷamanu’ and not ‘kalakalamanu’. In the present day, it is rendered as ‘kalakalamanu’. Likewise, with regard to structure, in the publication of S A Rāmasvāmi Aiyar, the first caraṇa is of two āvarta-s, whereas in current practice, it is of one āvarta. The melodic structure of the caraṇa-s is similar to that seen in the current practice with only small variations.

VI. Observations

The observations regarding the pañcaratna kīrtana-s as seen in the early publications are as follows:

- The kīrtana-s ‘Sādiñcanē’ and ‘Endarōmahānubhāvulu’ set in the rāga-s Ārabhi and Śrī have not undergone any changes from the early publications till date.
- The variations are seen with regard to the other kīrtana-s, where in the kīrtana ‘Jagadānandakāraka’, the variation is seen only with regard to the sequence of the caraṇa-s.
- In the kīrtana ‘Duḍukugala’, the first caraṇa as seen in the publication of S A Rāmasvāmi Aiyar is also seen in current practice, but not in the earlier publications. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, this caraṇa is in Samskr̥t language and all the other caraṇa-s are in Telugu.
- In the kīrtana ‘Kanakanarucirā’, initially the text only was available in the Saṅgītakalānidhi of Taccūru Brothers where the structure resembles a normal kīrtana with Pallavi, Anupallavi and Caraṇa. Later in the Saṅgītasudhāmbudhi of K V Śrīnivāsa Aiyāṅgār also the notations are available only for the Pallavi, Anupallavi and one caraṇa and the for the rest of the caraṇa-s, the text is available.
- As seen in the kīrtana ‘Duḍukugala’, in the kīrtana ‘Kanakanarucirā’ also, the additional caraṇa-s are predominantly set in Samskr̥t. For instance, the 6th caraṇa ‘Sukhāspada’ is in Samskr̥t and the first half of the 3rd, 4th and 5th caraṇa-s are in Samskr̥t and the second half is in Telugu.
- In the notation available in the publication ‘Śrī Tyāgarājasvāmivāri kīrtanalu’ of S A Rāmasvāmi Aiyar, the melodic structure of the first caraṇa differs from that seen in current practice.
- In the Saṅgīta-sampradāya-pradarśini of Subbarāma Dikṣita, the notation is available for all the kīrtana-s except ‘Kanakanarucirā’.

VII. Conclusion

From the study of the notations of the Ghana rāga Pañcaratna kīrtana-s of Tyāgarāja as seen in the early publications, it can be said that except the two kīrtana-s ‘Sādiñcanē’ and ‘Endarōmahānubhāvulu’, the other three kīrtana-s have undergone many changes. The variations with regard to the sequence of caraṇa-s in the kīrtana ‘Jagadānandakāraka’ suggests that lot of thought process would have gone into formulating the sequence that is prevalent today as there seems to be a logic behind the sequence. The inclusion of the additional caraṇa-s in ‘Duḍukugala’ and ‘Kanakanarucirā’ with a mixture of Samskr̥t suggests that these caraṇa-s would have been added during the first half of the 20th century and hence were not documented in the early publications.

Moreover, the inclusion of the kīrtana 'Kanakanarucirā' in the ghana rāga pañcaratna kīrtana-s itself seems to be a question as till the early 18th century, the rāga Varāḷi has not been mentioned as a ghana rāga. In addition, this kṛti was first seen with a regular kīrtana structure with Pallavi, Anupallavi and Caraṇa and the svarasāhitya caraṇa-s are seen only in a later period in contrast to the other kīrtana-s which are available with notation as early as 1912. Thus, it may be inferred that only after the practice of rendering the Pañcaratna kīrtana-s came into vogue, the kīrtana Kanakanarucirā would have been formulated.

It is to be noted that SSP does not give the notation or the text of the kīrtana 'Kanakanarucirā' despite mentioning the rāga as a ghana rāga. This clearly suggests that the kīrtana could have been formulated later when the concept of rendering the pañcaratna kīrtana-s came into vogue.

Finally, it can be said that the documented notations also have undergone changes which may be attributed to the presence of different śiṣya parampara-s of Tyāgarāja and probably all the versions were not documented in the earlier publications. Moreover, it has to be noted that the apart from the pañcaratna kīrtana-s, versions of many kṛti-s that are sung today evolved in the later part of the 20th century.

Annexure 1

This article has an annexure that gives the list of early publications that have the text and notation of pañcaratna kīrtana-s. The name of the publications has been given in abbreviated form in the table and the abbreviations used have also been given.

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ⁱ Pre 1940 Publications N Ramanathan

ⁱⁱ Pāṭāntara-s in the compositions of Music trinity, C K Ritha