

MOODS AND EXPRESSIONS OF RHYTHMS OF KERALA

Deepti Omchery Bhalla
Head & Dean ,Department of Music,
Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, University of Delhi, Delhi, India,
email: LASYANGAM@REDIFFMAIL .COM (small letters)
A-121 ,Ashok Vihar ,Phase 3,Delhi 110052.

About author

Deepti Omchery Bhalla is Professor of Kaṛṇāṭak Music at the Department of Music, University of Delhi , where she has been teaching and guiding research scholars since 1985. She holds a Phd in Sōpāna music of Kerala. She has 12 yrs of Kathakali training and performance experience. A leading exponent of Mohiniāṭṭam since past three decades, her research findings have found expressions through her dance choreographies and music presentations, recorded through CD's and DVD's and documented for National Archives. A recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi award conferred by Govt of India, she is currently working on the rhythms in the temple and traditional music and dance forms of Kerala.

Abstract

After the Vedic civilization, music in India existed as an accompaniment of *Nāṭya* , the drama and *Nṛṭya* , the dance . Eventually, music and dance detached themselves from *Nāṭya*, and evolved as independent artforms . With the development of *Rāga* (melody), the *Tāla* (rhythm cycle), became a subordinate to the *Rāga*. But, in Kerala, the drumming became more predominant and *Tāla* got free from this servitude. *Tāla* instruments worked independently resulting in *Tāla-Vādyā-Laya-Vinyāsa* , a flowing sequence of rhythm in musical instruments and the *Tāla-Vṛnda-Vādyā* , the musical ensembles . The objective of this study is to establish the uniqueness of *Tāla*-s of temple music in Kerala, which differ from the present day *Sūlādi Sapta tāla*-s of Kaṛṇāṭak music , with expressions and metrical setup, based on specific rituals and customs that heighten human emotions or *Bhāva*-s with a goal towards attaining tranquillity and self-realisation.

Key words

1. Nāṭya
2. Nṛṭya
3. Rāga
4. Tāla, Tāla -Vādyā-Laya -Vinyāsa
5. Tāla-Vṛnda-Vādyā

Introduction

In the history of Indian music whether folk, sacred, secular or traditional theatrical forms, what is striking is the sparkling variety found in the rhythmic and melodic structures of songs. In Kerala, the rich variety in these songs came about with the intermingling of various races , religions and cultures with the local inhabitants. Folk songs and dances which were the glorious blend of all cultures and religions formed the basis for the later developments of its theatre, music and dance. Even though they were termed as folk they were well developed in structure, technique, makeup and the costume, and may be termed regional variations than folk.

The Chandōbaddha – metrical setup in Kerala Tāla-s

The mellifluous traditions of devotional music and its popularity in the southern states, including Kerala nourished the Temple arts, especially its music. The *Rāga*-s, *Tāla*-s, songs and *Vādyā*-s , have expressions which are highly advanced , imaginative , typical and sublime. The songs whether rendered in the temple rituals, religious festivals , traditional stages , the folk or even the popular were *Chandōbaddha* , or bound to meters , with two important modes of expressions , the sounded action or *Saśabda kṛiya* and the unsounded action or *Niśśabda kṛiya* , a system which existed much before the *Sūlādi sapta tāla* scheme , adopted in the modern day classical *Kaṛṇāṭk* Music . The folk arts of Kerala like Tullal , *Arjunanrittam* , *Padēni(Padayeni)* etc include *Tāla*-s with complicated rhythmic patterns . The most complicated rhythm patterns can be best seen in the *Tāla* instruments adopted for temple observances.

Tāla and Svāra-s in the aesthetic enhancement of singing

That the *Tāla* makes *Svāra* resplendent can be observed in the rendering of *Rāga ālāpana* (the melodic expansion of a *Rāga*) in *Nādaswara* to the accompaniment of *Tavil* , its accompanying instrument .The soft sounding of *Tāla* or a beat , enhances the emotive appeal of singing , an age old practice adopted in the *Rāga ālāpana* rendered in *Koṭṭipāḍi sēva* in the sanctum of Kerala temples . The same is adopted in its traditional theatrical presentations like Kathakali where the two singers *Ponnāni(main singer)* and *Sinkidi* (supporting singer) render the *Raga ālāpana* to a beat given on the *tāla*-s (*Kuzitālam* and *Āngala*) , held in their hands.

Tauryatrika , the triad concept of Sangīta

The term *Sangīta* till the mediaeval period included *Gīta*, *Vādyā* and *Nṛitta* (song, instrumental music and dance) which continues to exist as a living tradition, both in temple arts like Kathakali and *Kūdiāṭṭam* and folk arts like *Tullal* and *Padeni* , of Kerala. The *Tullal pāṭṭukal* of the legendary figure of the 18th cent- Kunchan Nambiyar is a branch of poetic literature, which combines musical verses and songs set to *Rāga*-s and *Tāla*-s, meant for singing , acting and dancing to the accompaniment of instruments like *Tāla* (cymbals), *Maddalam*, *Tutti* (a wind instrument now replaced by harmonium or electronic drone, *Sruti*) . It is from the verses given in this poetry with words set to the different *chanda*-s that one gets clarity to the exact delineation of Kerala tāla-s like *Kumbha*, *Marma* and *Laxmi* etc. Each of these *Tāla*-s, are set to words that clearly define their metric setup.

(Bhalla, 2006)

Sōpāna Saṅgīta – the temple music of Kerala

This music is primarily based on *Bhāva or Nāṭya*, found very noticeably in theatre, folk art forms and in the temple observances of Kerala, which are connected to invoking (*Āvāham*) and revoking (*Udvāsanam*) the powers of the deity from the sanctum and back to it. The glorification of deities, *Rāga-s* and *Tāla-s*, can be observed in the *Tyāni-s* or the *Dhyāna sloka-s* rendered by Mārār, the Temple drummer, who stands near the 'Sōpāna', steps that lead to the altar, offering the *Koṭṭipāḍi sēva*, an important temple service, through his singing, while beating the *Idakka* (temple drum). (Bhalla, 2006)

The *Rāga ālāpana* in *Sōpāna Saṅgīta* is *Tāla-bound*, progressing from slowest to the fastest towards a crescendo, through different speeds of singing and rhythm. Starting from *Pančama*, which is the basic note of the *Idakka*, the *Ālāpana* starts from the *Patikāla* the slowest speed, gradually increasing the speed to *Pančama*, the fifth highest speed or even *Ṣaṭkāla* its sixth highest speed, without making the listener aware of the change in the ascending speeds.

To invoke different Gods, specific *Tāla-s* like *Pančāri* (6 beats) *Muri-aḍanta* (5 beats), *Adanta* (14 beats), *Āmpaṭa* (8 beats), *Tripuṭa* (7 beats), *Ēkam* (4 beats) are adopted for rendering of these *Tyāni-s*. Likewise, the Temple percussions or the *Kṣētra tāla vādyā-s* too, are given Divine origin and the sound of their beats to sacred words. The two sounds 'Ta – Tom' produced on *Timila* (temple drum), reflects the two sacred words 'Tat Tvam'

(Marar, Trikkampuram Krishan Kutty, *Timila vidwan*, lineage of Shatkala Govinda Marar (personal communication, 26th Dec 2005).

Mārga (music of path, bound by fixed rules) and Dēśi (regional variations, changed to suit the taste of people of the region) in the Tāla-s

Besides being *Āchāndōbaddha* or based on metres, governed by *Gaṇa-s*, and *Varṇa-s* (metrical setup) what is unique about the *Kerala Tāla-s* is the equal counts for both sounded (*śaśabda*) as well as the unsounded (*nissabda*) beats, termed as *Ēkachuzāti tāla prastāra*, which is different from the present-day *Karṇāṭak tāla* system, marked by finger counts and beats. The *Ēkachuzāti tāla-s*, are found adopted in the traditional art forms like *Mudiyettu*, *Padayani* (*Padēni*), *Arjuna Nrīttam*, *Theyyam*, *Śāstāmpāṭṭu* etc (Marar, dhvani pratidwani, 2018). Also the *Anga* or *Prastāra* (section), *Āinna* (sign), *Vistāra* (counts with their expressions), *Kāla* (duration), *Collu* (syllables), differ in the same *Tāla* when rendered in folk, religious or ritualistic and classical or theatre.

Sūlādi Sapta Tāla -s and the Tāla-s of Sōpāna Saṅgīta

There are clear cut distinctions between the *Sūlādi tāla-s* of *Karṇāṭak* music and the *Tāla-s* of *Sōpāna Saṅgīta*. Though both follow the *Ṣaḍaṅga-s* which includes *Laghu*, *Druta*, *Anudruta*, *Guru*, *Pluta* and *Kākapāda*. *Karṇāṭak* music adopts only the first three *Anga-s* while the *Sōpāna tāla-s* adopt all, with predominance of *Laghu*, *Guru* and *Pluta*, which are the main *Anga-s* of the ancient *Mārga tāla-s* i.e. *Chachchatputa*, *Chāchaçaputa*, *Ṣaṭpita putrika*, *Sampadvēṣṭaka* and *Udghaṭṭa*. In *Sōpāna Saṅgīta*, the *Druta* is rendered with a *Tattu*, a beat and *Tūkku*, palms lifted upwards, *Anudruta* rendered as *Virāma*, pause or *Tūkku*. The value of *Laghu* which is equal to one *Mātra* or count, remains constant in *Sōpāna Saṅgīta* unlike as found in *Sūlādi Tāla-s* where the value of *Laghu* changes to 3, (*Tisra*), 4 (*chatusra*), 5 (*khandā*), 7 (*misra*) and 9 (*sankeerna*).

Table of Ṣaḍaṅga-s

ṢAḌAṆGA-S	SYMBOLS	MĀTRA-s	AKṢARA-S
Anudruta	V	¼	1
Druta	O	½	2
Laghu	L	1	4
Guru	8	2	8
Pluta	L 8	3	12
Kākapāda	1 V 8	4	16

(Sambamoorthy, 3.5.113, 2008)

Table of Mārga /Margi Tāla

Name of Tāla	Constituent Anga-s
Āchāchatputa	8 8 1 1 8
Chāchaçaputa	8 1 1 8
Ṣaṭpita putrika	1 1 8 8 8
Sampadvēṣṭaka	1 8 8 8 1 8 8
Udghaṭṭa	8 8 8

(Sambamoorthy, 4.7.152, 2008)

Another noticeable feature in *Sōpāna Saṅgīta*, not found in music, is that the value of *Anga-s* or sections of a *Tāla*, does not remain constant, unlike as found in the *Karṇāṭak* music. E.g. A *Tisra jāti tipuṭa tāla* in *Karṇāṭak* music, will have the same *Anga-s* irrespective of whether it is of 7 beats or multiples of 7. The *Tripuṭa tāla* in *Sōpāna Saṅgīta* will have same count of 7 beats in all Kerala art forms but their execution will differ when rendered in *Kṣētra Saṅgīta*, in the Traditional theatre like *Kathakali* and in folk form like *Padayani*. On the other hand, a 14 beats *Tāla* is named as *Adanta tāla* and also *Marma tāla* each differing in their *Anga-s* and execution from the other. In the *Sūlādi sapta tāla-s* of *Karṇāṭak* music there are *tāla-s* of 14 counts like *Ātuśra jāti dhruva* and *Khandā Aṭa* with different *anga-s*.

The *Sōpāna kṣētra Tāla -s* and *Rāga-s* strictly abide by the time theory laid down for different *Pūja-s* (rituals), assigned for specific Deities during different hour of the day. (Marar, 2018). Rare *kṣētra tāla-s* like *Raṇḍām tāla* (3 counts), *Mūnām tāla* (7), *Nālām tāla*

(8), *Anchām tāla* (9) *Śambhu tāla* (3), *Maṅgaḷa tāla* (4), *Śakaḍu tāla* (4), *Kārika tāla* (5) *Muṭakku tāla* (5) are adopted for the same .

Table I: Tala of 14 beats in Sulādi sapta tāla-s of Kaṛṇāṭak music, Kathakali (traditional theatre art form), Padayani /Padēni(ritualistic folk form), Kūdiāṭṭam (temple art form), OṭṭanTuḷḷal (folk form)

Art Form	Tala with 14 beats	Expression	Mātra-s/Akṣarakāla
Sūlādi Sapta tāla-s of Kaṛṇāṭak Music	Khanda Jāti Ata	Ta ka ta ki ta Ta ka ta ki ta Ta ka di mi	2+3 2+3 _2+2 = 14
	Ātuśra Dhruva	Ta ka di mi Ta ka Ta ka di mi Taka di mi	2+2 2 2+2 2+2 = 14
Kathakali	Adanta	Tai - Dhi Tai - TiTiTai - Ti Ti Tai -	2 1+2 3 +1 4+1
Padayani/Padēni	Tripuṭa	Ta Tai yum Taiyum Taiyum	1 2 2+2
Tuḷḷal	Marma	Tey yam Ta Tey yam Ta Ta Tey yam Ta Ta Ta Tey yam	2 1+2 1+1+2 1+1+1+2
Kūdiāṭṭam –	Adanta	Ta Ti Ti Tai - Ti Ti Ti Tai - Tai - Tai -	5 5 2+2

(Nair. Appukkuttan , 1974)

Table II - Śadaṅga-s employed in the Sōpāna and Kaṛṇāṭak music as per old traditions

Name of the Anga	Prastāra Kaṛṇāṭak	Prastāra Sōpāna	Value, Kaṛṇāṭak	Value Sōpāna	Reckoning in Kaṛṇāṭak	Reckoning in Sōpāna
Anudrutam or Vidrutam or Vilaghu or Viguru or Virāmam	\ or ~	Silent expression, Niśśabda Kriya	1 Akṣara ; or ¼ of a Mātra	1 Laghu akṣara or ¼th of a Mātra	Saśabda kriya (1 beat)	Niśśabda kriya, duration is shown without sound
Drutam	O	O	2 Akṣara-s Or ½ of a Mātra	2 Akṣara-s or ½ of a Mātra	A beat and a wave of the hand	1 beat and one silent count
Laghu		...	Value of Akṣarakāla varies as per Jāti i.e. Trśra, Caturaśra, Khanda, Miśra and Sankīrṇa	One Mātra of 4 counts or one Laghu Akṣara Kāla of ¼th of a Mātra	1 beat and counting of fingers as per Jāti	1 beat and 3 silent counts (Mātra-Kāṭtal)

Guru	S	S or 8 or ∞	8 Akṣara kāla, or 2 Mātra-s ; presumably not in use	8 Akṣarakāla-s or 2 Mātra-s	Not in use	First Mātra is a beat (Tattu) and the second is counted silently (Vikku)
Pḷutam	✓ S or S	\$ or ∞ or 8	12 Akṣara Kāla-s or 3 Mātra-s	12 Akshara Kāla-s or 3 Mātra—s	Not employed	1 beat and the second and third are counted silently by holding the hand in the air
Kākapādam	卐	Silent (....) Reckoning Δ or a line or + (plus)	16 Akṣaras or 4 Mātra-s	16 Akṣara-s or 4 Mātra-s	Not employed	One beat and the duration of 3 Mātra-s are counted silently.

(Bhalla, 2.45,2006)

Kriyāṅga and Sēvāṅga Tāla-s

The *Tāla* instruments are firmly related to temple observances, with two main modes of performances, the *Kriyāṅga* and *Sēvāṅga*. The *Kriyāṅga* is performed inside the temple and *Sēvāṅga* is performed outside the temple precincts, during the religious festivals and ceremonies. The *Kriyāṅga* is also called as *Anuṣṭhāna*, which is associated with the *kriya* paddhati that support one of the qualities of the *Pañcabhūta-s* namely the *Śabda*, the others being *Sparṣa*, *Rūpa*, *Rasa* and *Gandha*. The *Sēvāṅga* is also called as '*aswādāna*' by some which include the performances of *Mēlam-s* like *Āṇḍa*, *Pañcāri*, *Pāṇḍi*, *Tāyampaka*, *Kēḷi* and *Pañcāvādyam*.

Kriyāṅga or Anuṣṭhāna Tāla-s (Ritualistic)

These are associated with the *Tāntrik puja-s* (Ritual offerings) and *Kriyā-s* or the ritualistic temple services that invoke (Āvāhanam) and revoke (Udvāsanam) the deity spirits in the sanctum. The percussion ensembles for various performances during these services include instruments like *Maram* (a wooden drum similar to *Maddalam*) and the presentation is called *Pāṇi*, *Idakka Kūru* (*samāntara* or in harmony), *Utsava Bali kūru*, *Śiveli kūru*, *Śribhūta Bali Kuru*, *Jayābali* etc. The most difficult use of *Tāla* instruments is in the drumming of *Pāṇi*. The drumming of *Pāṇi* for daily observances is called *Sādhāraṇa pāṇi* and for *Utsavabali*, *Aṣṭabandhakalāśam* etc, is called *Valiya pāṇi*. The *Sādhāraṇa pāṇi* also called as *Āṇḍi pāṇi* (minor instrument ensemble) is played mainly on the instrument '*Timila*' while the *Valiya Pāṇi* (major instrumental ensemble) is played on '*Maram*'. The performance of *Pāṇi* on '*Maram*' is confined solely to the sanctum and the ritualistic rites of the temple and therefore the focus is not so much on the rhythmic virtuosity but performance only to aid the *Tantri* or the priest in invoking and revoking the powers. *Maram* also sometimes referred to as '*Mantram*' i.e meant only for *Tantrik* rites is similar to *Maddalam*, smaller in size and lacks the fine tonal quality of the latter. It is for its tonal quality that the *maddalam* is adopted for rhythmic accompaniment to the temple theatre art forms like *Kathakali* and the percussion ensembles like the *Melam-s*, performed during temple ceremonies and festivals.

Valiya pāṇi - Vaiṣṇavam pāṇi and Śaivam pāṇi

Of the two types the *Vaiṣṇavam pāṇi* and *Śaivam pāṇi*, the latter has almost disappeared. When the word '*kachataṭṭha*' is pronounced as quickly and clearly as possible, the time taken to pronounce one letter is equivalent to one *akṣarakāla* here. Thus, according to the *akṣarakāla tāla* is augmented to decide on a very low *kāla* (tempo) and determining the *akṣarakāla* in his mind, the player beats on each side of the instrument using his right hand and left hand alternatively. The *Akṣarakāla* is then gradually reduced and concluded by intensifying the tempo of *Tāla*.

The practice scheme of Vaiṣṇava pāṇi: 32 beats

1st *kālam*: one beat using one hand, and after 31 *Akṣarakāla*, on the 32nd, beat using the other hand. In this manner, after 7 beats, on the 8th one, the first *Kālam* is brought to an end by clapping both the hands.

2nd *Kālam*: rendered in the same pattern as above; 32 *Akṣarakāla* –s is reduced to 16.

3rd *Kālam*: 16 *Akṣarakāla* –s is reduced to 8.

4th *Kālam*: 8 *Akṣarakāla* is reduced to 4.

The practice scheme of Śaiva pāṇi:128 beats

This also has 1st *Kālam* (32 *Akṣarakāla*), 2nd *Kālam* (16 *Akṣarakāla*), 3rd *Kālam* (8 *akṣarakāla*), and 4th *Kālam* (4 *Akṣarakāla*). After the 4th *Kālam*, there is a beat called *Āṇḍi kōl* (*Vaiṣṇavam pāṇi* does not have this).

In the *Pāṇi-s* performed at the sanctum; a closure is required to retrieve the spirit that was invoked, the drumming is therefore rendered to a speed in the descending order – beginning in 4th speed and ending in 1st speed. This is also performed during the *Navikarāna Kalāśam*, with the installation of a new idol. A very difficult practice, that requires the player to have a complete control over the *Laya*. The *Pāṇi-s*, strictly abide by the *Tāla-s* prescribed for different *Bali-s* or offerings like boiled rice etc to deities. The *Svara tāḷādi lakṣaṇa* mentions about 22 deities and *Tāla-s* assigned to each.

Table III - Svāra tālādi lakṣaṇa

Deity	Tāḷa
Brahma	Raṇḍām , Mūnām , Muṭakku
Śiva	Takaḍu
Viṣṇu	Muṭakku
Indira	Munam
Agni	Mutakku
Ganapati	Anécām
Saraswati	Mūnām

(Bhalla.2.58,2006).

Tāḷa -s for Kriyāṅga sēva as per ‘Tāḷa Vādyā Vidhānam’

Kriyāṅga Tāḷa	Mātra/Akasarakala	Anga	Total Akṣara-s	Deity	Pradakṣiṇa
Ekam	1	Laghu	4	Viṣṇu, Sāsta, Saṅmukha, Dvārapāla-s, Dikpālaka-s	5 th Aka pradakṣiṇam and 2 nd and 3 rd Pura pradakṣiṇam
Raṇḍām	1+ 2 = 3	Laghu , Guru	12	not mentioned	1 st Pura pradakṣiṇam, Sribhūtabali, Utsavabali, Kalaśam
Munām Similar to Tisra triputa in sulādi sapta tāḷa-s (different expression)	3+2+2 = 7	Plutam , Guru, Guru	28	Brahma, Viṣṇu, Saraswati, Garuda, Ananta, Ćandra, Indra, Sōma and Iśāna.	1 st Aka pradakṣiṇam and Dikbali-s in the North-West corner.
Nālām	3+1+2+2=8	Plutam, Laghu, Guru and Guru.	32	Balipīṭha.	end of the fifth Pradakṣiṇam
Anécām	. 3+1+1+2+2=9	Plutam, Laghu (silence or nissabda kriya) Laghu, Guru and Guru	36	Gaṇēśa	fourth Aka Pradakṣiṇam
Śambhu	½+½+2 =3	Drutam, Drutam , Guru.	12	Not mentioned	Third Pura Pradakṣiṇam
Maṅgaḷa	2+1+1= 4	Guru, Laghu, Laghu	16	Bali pīṭha, Kṣētra Pāla-s	Aka Pradakṣiṇam
Śakaḍu	1+1+2 = 4	Laghu, Laghu, Guru	16	Not mentioned	Pura Pradakṣiṇam and also for Sribhūta Bali, Śivēli, Aṣṭa Bandha Kalāśam
Mutakku	2+1+2=5	Guru, Laghu Guru	20	Viṣṇu, Brahma, Dikpāla-s, Agni, Nirutti, Vāyu	Aka Pradakṣiṇam Balipīṭha

Takaḍu	3+1+1+2+2 = 9	Plutam, Laghu , Laghu , Guru , Guru	36	Viṣṇu, Śiva, Vīrbhadra and Dikpāla-s Varuṇa and Kubēra	fourth Aka Pradaḱṣiṇam and for Śivēli, Kalāśam, Utsavabali
Kārika	1+1+1+2 = 5	Laghu, Laghu, Laghu, Guru.	20	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

(Bhalla, 2.5.,2006)

Kriyāṅga sēva as per Svara tālādi lakṣaṇam

In many Pūja-s and Bali-s, Tāla-s commonly adopted for stage and traditional theatres are also included. Tāla -s like Ācempaṭa, Aḍanta, Tripuṭa, Pañcāri, and Ēka find new expressions when rendered at the sanctum, which are to be in tandem with the rituals and therefore different from those rendered in traditional theatres ,like Kūdiāṭṭam ,Kathakali and folk like Tullal , Padayani ,Mudiyēṭṭu etc.

Sēvāṅga Kriya-s - Mēlams

The sēvāṅga kriya-s include Ācenda melam , Pañcāvādyam, Tāyamvaka, and Keli which are the Kṣētra vādyā-s associated with drumming in the temple ceremonies and festivals.

Ācēṇḍa Mēlam

Ācēṇḍa mēlam is part of the vādyā mēlam-s used in temple festivals for Śivēli(the daily ritual of taking the idol of Gods to outside the sanctum sanctorum), temple processions , etc. The mēlam-s such as Pañcāri, Aḍanta, Ācempaṭa, and Ācampa are usually performed within the temple walls and Pāṇḍi mēlam outside the temple walls. There are few exceptions where the Pañcāri melam is rendered inside the temple precincts as seen in Trissur Pūram ,during the procession of Paramakkāvu bhagavathy , in Vadakunātha kshētram and Chērpṭu Bhagavathy , Perumanam - āraṭṭu puzha Pūram

The Pañcāri mēlam is considered the emperor amongst the chenda meloms . The mēlam (6 beats cycle) is played in five kāla-s or five different speeds.

Kāla	Mātra-s
1 st	96
2 nd	48
3 rd	24
4 th	12
5 th	6 .

Ācempaṭa mēlam adopts the Ācempaṭa Tāla of 8 beats, played in 4 kāla-s or speeds each with mātra-s 64,32,16 and 8 respectively . The Aḍanta mēlam adopts the Aḍanta Tāla of 14 beats, played in 4 different Kāla-s with mātra-s 56,28,14 and 7 respectively. The fourth stage with 7 mātra-s in Aḍanta tāla is called as Ācappu of aḍanta ,where the tāla is rendered in beats of 4 and 3 respectively .The Ācampa mēlam adopts Ācampa Tāla of 10 beats, in 4 Kāla -s with matra-s 80,40,20,10 respectively . The Pañḍi mēlam adopts the Triputa Tāla of 7 beats , played in four different speeds 56, 28, 14 and 7 beats respectively .This expression of this tala differs from the other mentioned melam-s .

What is interesting to note is that all these mēlam-s commence in the multiple of 8, which is the basic mātra of Ācempaṭa Tāla. It is in the first kāla, or the slowest speed, that we get the feel of Ācempaṭa and therefore the name Ācempaṭa vaṭṭam (cycle of Ācempaṭa).

Tāyampaka (tāyambaka or tāyamvaka)

Is the elaborate layavinyāsa (the composition/arrangement of laya) on the Ācēṇḍa based on Ācempaṭa Tāla. The Patikāla (slowest speed) in the Ācempaṭa Tāla which gradually increases and ends in a Kūru (samāntara or in harmony) , before proceeding to the next section. The Kūru is set to Tāla-s like Pañcāri, Ācampa and Aḍanta , the multiples of which are multiples of 8, the principle cycle of Ācempaṭa Tāla .They mark the tīśra, khanda, and miśra gati-s, respectively. This is followed by Iḍavaṭṭam / Iḍanila/ Iḍa Kālam and Mērkolirukida , the in between cycles ,the speed of each faster than its predecessor . The Mērkolirukida will normally be in Atidruta kāla (fastest speed).

Pañcāvādyam

Pañcāvādyam is another instrumental ensemble associated with temples . It is based mainly on the Triputa Tāla , rendered in 5 speeds of 56,28,14, 7, 31/2 akṣarakāla-s respectively .As the name indicates, it includes five vādyā-s (musical instruments). 3.Idakka, 1. Timila, and 2.Ila taalma ,kombu Maddalam, .

Dakka ca kamsya vadyam ca (anushtup vrittam)

Bheri sankhas ca maddala

Pancha vadyam idi praahu

Aagamārtha visharada (marar,2018)

A sense of Ācempaṭa Tāla is felt in the cycle of 56 matra-s, with 8 Triputa cycles equivalents to 7 Ācempaṭa cycles. It is from 14 matra-s onwards that the real character of Tripuṭa emerges. In the discourse about the vādyā mēlam-s of Kerala, a laghu is always of one mātra. However, a mātra will have different akṣarakāla-s, similar to the gati bhēda-s adopted in the Tāla-s in Karnatak music. Therefore, a mātra may be of one akṣarakāla-s or more than one akṣarakāla-s. A Tāla cycle of 56 mātra-s will have 56 akṣarakāla where one mātra is one akṣara kāla only.

The drishya kala-s of Kerala like Kudiattam ,Kathakali, Tullal ,Padayani and Arjuna nrittam also adopt Tala-s which are complex and distinct . The author due to limitation of length of article has not incorporated them in this current article.

Works Cited

Articles

Groesbeck, Rolf.(winter ,1999), Cultural Constructions of Improvisation in Tāyampaka, a Genre of Temple Instrumental Music in Kerala, India ,Ethnomusicology, Published by: University of Illinois, Press on behalf of Society for Ethnomusicology, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 1-30 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/852692>

Widdess ,D.R., (1980 - 1981), *Rhythm and Time-Measurement in South Asian Art-Music: Some Observations on 'tāla'* .Source: Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association, Vol. 107, pp. 81-138.Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd. on behalf of the Royal Musical Association Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/766121>,Accessed: 07-06-2020 10:28 UTC.

Nair. Appukkuttan , Tala Vādyangal Drisya Kalakalil , Margi Souvenir , 1974, Trivandrum , p 35-41

Pattirathu Sankara Marar, Tala Vadyankal kshetranushthanankalil ,Malayalam, (Instruments in Temple Observances, p 21,22,23, Margi Publications June,1974, Trivandrum ,Kerala)

Books

Bhalla ,Deepti Omchery , 2006, Vanishing Temple Arts, Shubhi Publication , Gurgaon , ch 2 , Pp 5-61.

Marar,Kallekulangara ,Achutankutty., 2018, Dhvani- Prati Dhvani (mal),Emoor Publications , Palakad ,PP 278-306.

Kuroor, Manoj , 2014 ,Keralathile Thaalangalum Kalakalum, Sahitya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sangham,(mal) ISBN 978-93-84571-17-7.

Sambamoorthy ,P , 1994, 2008 ,South Indian music , ,Indian music publishing house ,Chennai. Vol III , Ch 5 , p 113 ,Vo IV , Ch VII, p152, , Vol IV Ch V , P 86, 92

Shringy ,R.K, Sharma , Premalata , 1978, Sangita Ratnakara of Sarangadeva ,Swaragataadhyaya (v) Sangeeta lakshanam tatra margā desi vibhaagashca ,Treatment of svara, ,Motilal Banarasidas , Delhi, Ch. 1, p 10 .

Interviews

Marar, Trikkampuram Krishan Kutty, Timila vidwan , lineage of Shatkala Govinda Marar personal communication , 26th Dec 2005 .

Marar Achuta - personal communication ,1997

