

Appreciating Hindustani Music
Dr.Lakshmi Sreeram
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

Lecture 17
Classification of Ragas - The Raagaanga System

So, we will talk about the Raagaanga Paddhati, the Raagaanga system of classification of ragas in this video. Now this Paddhati this Raagaanga Paddhati finds more traction among musicians themselves. What is Raagaanga? Raagaanga is a word that is derived from raga plus anga- it is Raagaanga is you can say limb you can say or part.

So, in this case raga ang really refers to a phrase a typical phrase. What may be called raga vachaka phrase, that is, a phrase that tells you what that raga is. So, for instance [Music] just say Ni Dha Ni with the particular what is called Ucharan the way it is rendered. [Music] That this phrase belongs to Kalyan. raag Kalyan or raag Yaman owns it. And if this phrase is found in other ragas there is grounds for classifying that raga under Kalyan- Kalyan ang Kalyan Raagaanga. So, this is how this system works.

So, [Music] this is again a very typical phrase of Yaman or Kalyan and it is a typical Kalyan ang, a limb of Kalyan. So, how the system works is that, major ragas are regarded as Raagaanga ragas, that is, their limbs or the phrases that make it make up those ragas are regarded as definitive of those ragas right that is what they are.

And when these phrases are found in other ragas those other ragas are regarded as Kalyan ang or Kalyan Prakaar. the two words for this Kalyan Prakaar also be same or you know Malhar Prakaar.

We say it is a kind of it is a type of Kalyan. That is the Raagaanga Paddhati. So, now, even though this is not you know perfect or flawless it is still you know it is based on the personality of the raga and therefore, it is preferred.

It is it takes into account not just what notes are used which is what the mela system does, but how these notes are used. How the notes are brought into phrases. And how they are delivered how they are rendered? Raga Ucharan swara, Swarochara as it is called swara how is it delivered? How is it rendered?

So, it really includes elements such as ornament shruti and also the laya the internal spacing and internal distribution or the laya, that is what you can say is the rhythm with which internal rhythm of that phrase. Now Raagaanga Paddhati is as I said fairly popular among the Indian the performance tradition itself and different musicians theorists have come up with different number of Raagaangas.

There is we how many main ragas do we have? How many Raagaanga ragas do we have? So, here also that is the difference of opinion and Narayan Moreshwar Khare who was a disciple of

Vishnu Digambar Paluskar.

Narayan Moreshwar Khare who was a disciple of Vishnu Digambar Paluskar who was another epoch maker of the 20th century. Raagaanga Paddhati is really most closely associated with Khare and he proposed 30 raagaangas, that is 30 main important Raagaanga ragas.

Now how does the Raagaanga Raagaanga system work? So, let us look at a few Raagaangas and how ragas are classified under these Raagaanga. Let us take Bhairav- Bhairav is an ancient raga really. And uh Bhairav is this is; obviously, its one of the Raagaanga ragas. And what some what are some important angas of Bhairav? [Music]. Now this is a very important ang of Bhairav. It is Shuddha Ga Shuddha Gandhar Komal Rishabh that Meend and the Rishabh is the Re is slightly oscillated.

Now this is a typical phrase of Bhairav. And if this is found in a some other raga that is grounds for classifying that raga under Bhairav you say Bhairavang- Bhairav is a Raagaanga raga and this is a Bhairav Prakaar the type of Bhairav. Ahir Bhairavas I mentioned earlier has this phrase [Music] does not matter that the rest of the raga rest of the swaras are are different does not they are not the swaras that you that are used in Bhairav, but it is still classified under Bhairav. Ahir Bhairav is a “Bhairav ka Prakaar”. In fact, h Pandit Ramashreya Jha who is who was a leading musicologist- Shastrakar- a person who wrote a treatises in Hindi about ragas. When he talks about Ahir Bhairav he says that Ahir Bhairav belongs to the Bhairav ka Prakaar right. It belongs to the Bhairav ang, but even though the Dha and the Ni are different from Bhairav thaat it is still classified under the Bhairav thaat.

So, just because Ahir Bhairav has the Bhairav ang that is grounds for also classifying it under Bhairav thaat. It is the point here is both these Paddhati are used simultaneously mela Paddhati and Raagaanga Paddhati both have issues. They both are as I said imperfect one of them because they address different aspects of ragas- mela only addresses the swaras whereas, Raagaanga Paddhati addresses the personality the melodic personality of the raga. So, when Shastrakaras people musicians and people who discourse about music, they freely use both systems there is no conflict here. its not that you have to you know commit yourself to only one classification systems, its not like that. Let me demonstrate Kanada Kanada is another important Raagaanga some important phrases here are-Darbari Kanada is of course, one of very famous important raga here [Music].

Now, that Ga is oscillated, but it is different from the oscillation of may say the Malhar ang [Music]. Now this is typical of, this is a very typical phrase of the of of Kanada ang and it is there of course, in Darbari Kanada[Music]. Again this is [Music] that Ni Pa [Music] that long glide to the Ni from the Pa [Music] it is a [Music] this is also a very typical Kanada ang. We have Abhogi Kanada which has this phrase of Re Ga Ma Re Sa [Music]. So, the Dha is different from Darbari Kanada, but here it is Shuddha Darbari has Komal but both of them belong to the same family of ragas. They cannot belong to the same thaat. Because the Dha are different Dha is different, but they belong to the same family again you have ragas like Nayaki Kanada Sahana Kanada many Kanada Prakaars are there.

Because they will be using one or the other of these phrases that define Kanada ang for instance Nayaki [Music] that Ni Pa [Music] does not have [Music]. This phrase is not found in Nayaki Kanada, but this other phrase is for [Music]. Because of it Ni Pa the way the Ni Pa is rendered in Nayaki it is regarded as a Kanada Prakaar .

Similarly, Sahana Kanada is like [Music], again the same Ni Pa [Music]. We often have the same cluster of notes, the same set of notes, but they give a very different very different personality. This can be accommodated under the Raagaanga Paddhati not under mela; obviously, for instance if you look at if you if you look at Sarang ang.

Sarang is also an important ang. So, here you have [Music] its not [Music] typically Sarang will not use this kind of [Music] that belongs to Kanada ang. So, Sarang is you can look at this the link that is given below in which Pandit Ramashreya Jha gives a masterful demonstration of this Re Ma Pa. The same set of swaras in Sarang and in another raag called Megh. He says that in Sarang the Re the Rishabha is Niraashrita.

So, [Music] the Re is just it stands by itself [Music]. This is of course, this is Brindavana Sarang this is a very important raag . There is another raag Madhmad Sarang which uses only the Komal Ni Brindavan Sarang uses both Ni's [Music] this is the Shuddha Ni [Music]. That is the Komal Ni [Music]. This Madhmad Madhmad Sarang another ancient raag, it uses only Komal Nishad [Music] this is Madhmad Sarang.

When the same notes are used in a different ang, the Malhar ang, [Music]. So, here the Re is its not independent [Music] its not like that [Music] its its there is an Andholan you bring it from the Madhyam [Music]. Again the Ni [Music]. So, just this that the Ni and the Re are shaken in Megh that is creates a world of difference between the two ragas.

So, Malhar it is another very important Raagaanga. Its main phrases are [Music] this is a very important phrase of Malhar along with the [Music] the Ga both Kanada and Malhar have Komal Gandhara and both are Andholit both are shaken, but it is a very different position in which they are shaken.

So, Kanada Gandhar is lower [Music]. This is Kanada Ga [Music]. So, it is the Ga there shaken with the Ma and here in Kanada the Ga is closer to the Re the Rishabh. So, these are all what make up for the Ucharan the rendering the Ucharan is often translated as pronouncing, but in this case of course, it is how it is rendered how you actually sing it. Let us listen to uh an important Malhar Prakaar Gaud Malhar gaud Malhar has the Malhar ang of Re Pa [Music]. So, that is the Malhar ang. Let us listen to Gaud Malhar.

[Music].