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Analysis of Sri Subrahmanyaya Namaste of Muthuswami Dikshitar in Kamboji raga

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Abstract

Muthuswami Dikshitar (March 24, 1775 – October 21, 1835) is one among the musical trinities of South Indian Music and his compositions are noted for the captivating and amazing music through the core of raga as well as the perfect lyrics. As Dikshitar was a Vainika (well-versed in veena), it is reflected in his compositions.

‘Sri Subrahmanyaya namasthe’, one of the jems among the kritis of Muthuswami Dikshitar has been taken for analysis, which incorporates the nuances in musical aspects as well as theoretical aspects. The kriti which has taken for the analysis is one of the popular composition in the most brilliant raga Kamboji. Sri Subbarama Dikshitar, the author of the monumental work, ‘Sangitha Sampradaya Pradarshini’ has described 72 Melas and their *Janyas*, with *Raga-lakshanas*, explanations, illustrative *Lakshana-Gitas* and *Sancharas*. He has also given 229 compositions of Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar with notations. The analysis of the kriti “**Sri Subrahmanyaya namasthe**” is based on the notation given in Sangitha Sampradaya Pradarshini. This article intends to reveal the following;

- Subrahmanya – The Embodiment of Power
 - Structural Analysis of Kamboji
 - The correlation with Kamboji and lyrics
 - Lakshana analysis of the lyrics
- a) Interpretation of word/meaning

b) Prosody

In short, this article analyzes the svarupa of Sri Subrahmanyaya namasthe in the raga Kamboji.

Keywords: Kamboji, Subrahmanya, Muthuswami Dikshitar, Subbrama Dikshitar, Sangita Sampradaya Pradarshini, Raga

Introduction

Music is an inevitable part of our culture. As the sloka , ' *Shisurveṭi pasur veṭi veṭi Ganarasam phani*'¹The Sloka appeals to both human beings and animals. Indian Music is composition oriented (Musical form) which comes in the realm of measured music. The Kriti is a highly developed musical form. It is a combination of Sahitya and Raga balanced with Tala. There are plenty of Vaggeyakaras who composed kritis. The composer has the freedom to select the constituting elements i.e., the theme, raga, tala etc. according to his state of mind to create a kriti. This musical form gained its perfect form in the period of Musical Trinities – Tyagaraja, Syamasastri and Muthuswami Dikshitar. Though there is a common pattern for kriti composition, each composer made their contributions to its structure, like the 'Madhyamakala' part which is a unique feature of Dikshitar kritis.

Muthuswami Dikshitar, the youngest among them, was the prolific composer and his compositions are intelligently created. His compositions represent both the South Indian and North Indian character. The compositions include all the intricate svarupa of the raga in different varieties of talas.

The role of Sri Subbarama Dikshitar in preserving the original form of Muthuswami Dikshitar compositions in his 'Sangitha Sampradaya Pradarshini' is great. He has described the compositions with characteristic gamaka prayogas with gamaka signs that give clear evidence of the Sampradaya which existed. Subbarama Dikshitar himself was a great musician

¹ P Sambamoorthy South Indian Music Book1 Page:2

and composer and successor of Muthuswami Dikshitar. This book is in two volumes and the language is Telugu. It comprises both the theory(Lakshana) and practical part (Lakshya).

The selected composition '**Sri Subrahmanyaya Namasthe Namasthe**' of **Muthuswami Dikshitar** is one of the popular compositions in the most brilliant raga Kamboji.

The article aims to understand the composition based on;

1. The depth of Philosophy
2. The nuances underneath (1.Gayatri Mantra, 2. Kundalini yoga, 3. Subrahmanya- The Embodiment of Power)
3. Thought provoking lyrical aspects and correlation of music. (1. Datu Analysis 2. Matu Analysis, 3. Datu-matu analysis)
4. Indepth knowledge in Sanskrit, Astrology, Sabda artha, the component of language.

Philosophical Enrichment

In Charana-

1. '**Tapatraya harananipuna tatvopadesha kartre** ' – (Tapatrya- Tapa+ Traya)Dikshitar hints about the three kinds of sufferings.

- Aadhyatmikam- Sufferings experienced by us because of our association with people, work, society etc.
- Aadhiboudhikam-Sufferings which are beyond our control like troubles we face due to pest damage, pathogens etc.
- Aaadhidhaivikam -Sufferings caused by natural calamities like storms and Earthquakes.

Subrahmanya is '*HaraNipuna*', '*Tatvopadeshaka*' by getting Tatva Upadesa, from the ultimate power of Subrahmanya, it is the certainty to come over all the sufferings.

2. The third line of the Charana is strengthened by giving the word ...*Ajhnana dhvanta*' which insisting that **He** demolish the 'Ajhnana' from the human heart

The nuances underneath

1. Gayatri mantra

Subrahmanya is the Gayatri Mantra. Ancestors proved that Gayathri Mantra has the supreme power to achieve success and happiness in life. Benefits of chanting Gayatri Mantra are;

- Regular chanting of Gayatri Mantra improves concentration and learning quality.
- It is known for removing toxins from the body.
- It acts as a breathing exercise and improves Lungs capacity
- Improves functioning of the nervous system.
- It keeps the heart healthy and removes the negativity.
- Chanting of Gayatri Mantra calms the mind.
- It reduces stress and anxiety².

The Gayatri Mantra is:

'Om bhur Bhuvah Swah Tat-savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi Dhiyo yonah prachodayat'³

The Mantra is portrayed in this song as;

In Anupallavi: '**Varenya**' means **Boon**. This word is present in Gayathri Mantra. Dikshitar emphasised that Lord Subrahmanya is the power to accomplish all the desires.

²<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/religion/mantras-chants/meaning-and-significance-of-the-gayatri-mantra/articleshow/75065013.cms>

³ <https://www.sathyasai.org/devotional/gayatri>

In Carana:

- The word '**Savitha**' for Sun. Savitha – The word literally means creator. Though the sun demolishes darkness, main role of sun is to induce rain, good growth of vegetation, and through that prosperity to our lives. Similarly, Subrahmanya not just vanquishes darkness (of the mind), but also fills this void space with wisdom The word 'Savitha' has been aptly employed.
- '**Dhiraya** – Dhira, Brave and Intelligent; one who is powerful and excel in wisdom. Here '**dhi**' is again from Gayathri Manthra which means, that protects one who sing it.
- '**Bhuradibhuvanabhoktre**' – Bhuvan means, Earth and other worlds whereas Bhokthe means, sovereign of the whole universe. Here again the words **Bhur**, **Bhuva** from the ultimate Mantra can be seen. Hence, by singing this song, one can come out from the ailment of body, removes the negativity from the mind, even body pain will be vanished and finally the balance of the body and mind will be equalized.

2. Kundalini Yoga



Practising Yoga makes us feel good and enhances our wellbeing. studies have shown that music has physiological benefits as well. Both music and yoga are said to have healing qualities.

'**Vasuki taksakadi sarpa svarupa dharanaya**' – means, He has taken the form (swarupa) of the Serpents like Vasuki and Takshaka. Here the word Sarpa literally means Kundalini which can be awakened by spiritual practice. By practicing Kundalini Yoga, one can unify his consciousness with Cosmic Consciousness by carefully performing exercises and meditations in a specific sequence and

combination. Practicing this song is the same as practicing Kundalini Yoga. The ultimate aim of life is moksha and here Dikshitar says through this composition that by practice one can enjoy the energy of life.

3. Subrahmanya – The Embodiment of Power

In Anupallavi: ‘vasavadi sakaladeva vanditaya’, - means who is worshipped by Vasava (Indra) and all other devas. **‘dasajanabhīstapra daksataraganyaya’** – Agraganya denotes one who is very good at fulfilling his devotees' wishes. Dikshitar not satisfied with the superlatives as he again tells Him as Agraganya, on who excels and the First (agra). By means He is the first one to fulfil the desires of his devotees. Here also Dikshitar expresses that Subrahmanya is the Embodiment of Power.

In Charana: The first line shows that **He** killed Asuras like Tharaka . The second line coined that **He** destroyed the evil (the Asuras) like Rajas, Thamas etc. from the mind of human beings. By coining these two sentences, Dikshitar conveys that Sub is the embodiment of Power to safeguard all in this Universe. **saktyayudha dhartre’ (Saktya+Ayudha+Dhartre)** The first word Sakti represents Devayani and Valli. Devayani, Kriya Shakti or the Power of Action and Valli, Iccha Shakti or the Power of Will. The word **saktyayudha dhartre’** Means- with the most powerful weapon. Here also Dikshitar insists that Subrahmanya is the Embodiment of Power. Worshipping Lord Muruga through one of the kinds of Bhaktis (Keertana – singing) evidently expressed by Dikshitar.

Datu Analysis

The kriti of ‘Sri Subrahmanyaya Namasthe’ is commenced on Mandra sthayi dhaivatha symbolically represents He resides in our Athma. D,,, S,,, R,,,

Shri su brah

The anya svara kakali ni comes in the first line of the pallavi. The word Namasthe beautifully correlated with the svaras, S Ṇ P Ḍ S which is in the Mantra sthayi,

denotes that the surrender to 'Thee' in the status of down to earth and also beautifully synchronizes with the Vishesha Prayoga ie, in the soul of Kamboji raga. The starting of the pallavi itself kindles the mind of music lovers and gives the thirst to visualize the whole song. The beauty of the song is that in majority of the places the Raga svarupa is in the Tara sthayi. The range of the kriti is from Mandra sthayi panchama to Tara sthayi gandhara.

Matu analysis

The decorative angas like Svarakshara, Prasa etc. can be seen. These are used profusely in the song. Svarakshara is the beauty signified by the confluence of the svara syllable and the identical or like-sounding syllable in the sahitya⁵. It is a Datu - Matu Alankara. Some examples are given:⁴

Sudha svarakshara	Suchitha svarakshara	Misra svaraksharam
1. M g r s Ma na si ja (pallavi)	1. S r m G Ta ra ka sim (charanam)	1. N d p D s Na ta vi dha tre
2. S P g M P Sa rpa sva ru pa (anupallavi)	2. D D p m ta tvo pa de	
3. D s n D Da sa ja na(, ,)		

⁴ Prof. P Sambamurthy South Indian Music Book3 page 157

Prasa: The correspondence of the letters in padas of the sections of the song is the Prasa

Anuprasa:	Dvitiyakshara prasam:	Antya prasam:
shrl <u>subrahmanyaya</u>	Sree <u>subrahmanyaya</u>	caranaya
namaste namaste	Bhu <u>suradi</u>	dharanaya
manasija koti koti <u>lavanyaya</u>	Va <u>su</u> ki thakshara	varenyaya
dIna <u>sharanyaya</u>	Va <u>sa</u> vadi sakalajana	agraganyaya
	Da <u>sa</u> janaabhishta prada	

Datu - Matu Analysis

The second line of Pallavi , Dikshitar makes us visualize Subrahmanya in our mind by utilizing the word 'manasija koti koti... Here lies the in-depth knowledge of Dikshitar by using the same word Koti' for the first time in the svara 'P m' the second koti is given with nokku Gamaka that means stressing the svara 'D p'

m g r s P m D p
ma na si ja ko ti ko ti

These beauties underneath in the kriti should be enjoyed through listening or singing. The mere words can't be realised. So the correlation of both the lyrics and raga svarupa give credits to each other. Likewise in Anupallavi the words 'bhusuradhi' and 'vasavadhi' are composed by Dikshitar in the lower octave and in the upper octave symbolizing bhusuras in the earth while, vasava in the heaven.

Conclusion

The composition 'Sri Subrahmanyaya namasthe' in Kamboji raga is a best example which gives the knowledge that Dikshitar has a commanding power not only in Music, but in Vedas also. The lyrics of his kritis reveal his in-depth knowledge in language, sashtra, tanthra etc. In this composition also Dikshitar portrayed the beauty of the raga as well as the sahithya. Proper rendering of this kriti gives the same benefits as Gayatri Mantra and Kundalini Yoga. One can see the exact blending of the brilliant raga and inspirational lyrics with technical

sophistication. It will be more heartening and pleasing, if the composition of this legend is understood properly. Moreover, there is no need to go in-depth into this composition to understand its beauty. The absolute beginning of it makes one realize its vastness & magnitude.

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