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Trendsetting Bharathi-s of Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Carnatic Music has a vast history traced from Vedic period. First music was used as an accompaniment for Vedic sacrifices and other rituals. Later music was considered as a supporting art form for performing dances. Gradually music developed as an individual performing art form. Adopting the new trends and social changes art music changed its course and developed. Many composers like Thirugnana Sambandhar, Appar,Sundarar, Jayadeva, Annamayya,Purandaradasa,Kshetragna, Ramadasa, Purandaradasa, Haridasas Marimuthapillai, Arunachalakavi, Muthuthandavar paved a strong foundation for the later development of Carnatic music. Among those composers early in the 20th century Sri Subrahmanya Bharathi and Suddhananda Bharathi were very different and their contribution to music is created a new trend in the society as well as in Music arena. Subrahmanya Bharathi and Kaviyogi Suddhananda Bharathi contributed many poems and musical compositions. They attempted to condemn the social evils of the society through their compositions. This paper is intended to highlight the overall contribution of these two composers and the impact of their contribution on society.

Key words: Cilapathikaram- Tevaram- Othuvvars- Tamil Music – Subrahmanya Bharathi- Editor- Varanasi- Compositions – Poetic excellence- Chindhu,Nondichindu Papapattu, Kannanpattu -Freedom movement- Kavi yogi- Yogic life- Bharatha shakthi,



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Introduction

Development of music in Tamil Nadu has resulted through the continuous process of Practice, experimentation and enhancement of various forms of music in the state. Tamil Nadu is known for its rich cultural heritage in classical music and dance. Music is an important integral part of Tamil language, and it can be heard at variety of religious ceremonies, including weddings and temple festivals. Tamil music has been kept alive for centuries. The oldest Tamil literature, the Sangam texts and epics, mention about the tradition of singing poems and songs in honor of gods or heroes. Later works, such as Cilappatikaram, include references to various types of pans and musical instruments used by Tamils from 5 different geographic regions.

During the Hindu Revival period, Tamil music became an important component of many compositions. Appar, Thirugnana Sambanthar, and Manikkavasagar were three saints who used it in their work. Arunagirinathar's Tiruppugazh works also contributed to this. Pannisai is the original Music of Tamil Nadu which is a traditional Indian music form and it still exists today. It is performed by a group of people called Ōthuvar-s. Ōthuvar-s were trained to render Tēvāram in Shivaite temples during daily rituals and still this is in practice in the Shivaite temples of south India .Tēvāram only taught and learned through gurukula system. The shaivaite temples played a vital role in preserving the melody of Tēvāram afresh over centuries. Tamil music has a long history. This is one of the oldest and most illustrious musical traditions on the planet. Muthu Thandavar , Arunachala Kavi , Marimutha Pillai, and other great artists composed songs that were passed down through generations of disciples.

Many composers contributed to strengthen the art music through their compositions and literary works. Musicians propagate these compositions through musical performances and



teaching to their students. Some have followed the tradition and add more essence to the art. Some have made a deep impression, bring change and set a trend through their contribution. This paper is intended to highlight the works of two trendsetting composers of the carnatic music arena who had composed songs in Tamil language.

Subrahmanya Bharathi (1882-1921)

Subrahmanya Bharathi was a Poet, Journalist, Freedom fighter and Social reformer from Tamil Nadu. Born to Chinnaswamy Iyer and Lakshmi Ammal on 11th December 1882, in a village called Ettayapuram in Tirunelveli District in Tamil Nadu. His childhood name was Subbiah. Born in an orthodox Brahmin family Subrahmanya Bharathi started writing poems from his 7th year onwards.

He started writing poetry in Tamil at the tender age of seven. At the age of 11, he won a debate in the court of Ettayapuram Raja and was bestowed the title 'Bharathi' (meaning blessed by Goddess Saraswati) since he impressed all the eminent men present in the court with his intellect and erudition. Bharathi was married to Chellamal when he was 15. After that, he spent 2 years in Benares and learned Sanskrit, English and Hindi. His world expanded from the little town in South India to the great stretches of India and beyond. He also worked as an editor of magazines and newspapers. He also contributed to these journals. His poems and hymns were based on diverse themes like patriotism, relationship between man and god, Russian and French revolutions, children, devotional, etc. These magazines included Swadeshmitran, India and Bala Bharatham. In Pondicherry, he edited and published journals *India*, *Vijaya*, *Bala Bharatham* and *Suryodayam*. In 1909, the British government banned 'India' and 'Vijaya' in India. Bharathi also met great leaders like Aurobindo, Lala Lajpat Rai and V V S Aiyar while in Pondicherry. He started learning Vedic literature here. He translated Vedic hymns, Bhagavad Gita and Patanjali's Yoga Sutra into Tamil.



Bharathiar wrote thousands of poems on various topics. His poetic excellence shines through the following topics and his writings are very popular among the Tamil poetic lovers.

1. Pappa Pattu (பாப்பா பாட்டு)
2. Kuyil Pattu (கூயில் பாட்டு)
3. Kannan Pattu (கண்ணன் பாட்டு)
4. Panchali Sabatham (பாஞ்சாலி சபதம்)
5. Devotional songs (பக்தி பாடல்)
6. National Integration songs (தேச பக்திபாடல்கள்)
7. Pudiya Athichudi (புதிய ஆத்திச்சூடி)
8. Viduthalai Padalgal (விடுதலை பாடல்கள்)
9. Songs on Jesus and Allah
10. Songs on Social evils etc..

He composed Sindhu, Nondisindhu and other poetical meters for his poems. He gave the tunes and mention ragas also for his compositions. He composed only 2 compositions purely in Sanskrit, with the vast majority being in the rich language of Tamil. Among them the song 'Bhoo loka kumari he amrutha nari' tuned in raga Abheri is very popular in music concerts which has a theme of visualizing mother earth as a beautiful woman. At the instance of Independence Bharathiar songs are very much used to keep up the temper of freedom struggle among the people of Tamil Nadu. Later many of Bharathiar songs were used in Cinemas and music programs. Some thematic concerts also conducted on the compositions of Bharathiar.

- **Aduvome Pallu Paaduvome**



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- **Parukulle Nalla Nadu**
- **Oli padaitha Kanninai vaa vaa**
- **Parukulle Nalla Nadu**
- **Vazhga Nee emman (on praise of Mahathma Gandhiji)**
- **Odi vilayadu papa (on social evil)**
- **Achamillai Achamillai**
- **Chinnanchiru Kiliye**
- **Nenju Porukkuthillaye**
- **Suttum vizhichudar than**
- **Theedi unnai charan adainthen**
- **Sollavallayo Kiliye ...etc are some of his popular songs....**

In the Tamil music history and in Tamil literature compositions of Bharathi paved a new path and developed a new trend. Contribution of Bharathi to Tamil literature, poetry and music should be engraved with golden letters in the history of Tamil Nadu.

Suddhananda Bharathi

Suddhananda Bharathi was born in the family of saints, was a great Yogi, renowned poet, an educationist and a great teacher, born on 1897 in Sivaganga of Tamil Nadu. He was an Indian philosopher and poet. He composed more than 1000 songs in Tamil language. He lived as a saint throughout his life. He remained silent for 25 years at Aurobindo meera Ashram at Pondicherry from 1925-1950. His teachings are focused mainly on the search for God in Self, through the Sama Yoga practice he created.

Bharati wrote over 250 published works: 173 in Tamil, 50 in English, 10 in French, 4 in Hindi and 3 in Telugu. He was also conversational in Sanskrit,



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Kannada, Malayalam and Urdu. He is the first translator to have done both verse and prose renderings of the *Tirukkural* into English

In his work 'Bharata Shakti', Bharati describes his ideal of "Oneness in humanity living in communion with a single God in a world transformed". This work includes epic texts, lyrical dramas, operas, comedies, pastoral novels, news, biographies, and commentaries on illustrated works, essays, and poems in French. For this work, Bharati received the Raja Rajan Award from the Tamil University in Tanjore in 1984, conferring upon him the title of Doctor of Literature.

Some of his popular compositions

1. Adugiran ennul – Maand – Adi
2. Arul Purivai- Hamsadwani-Adi
3. Eppadi Paadinaro –Karnataka Devagandhari-Adi
4. Sakalakala Vaniye- Kedaram- Adi
5. Thookiya thiruvadi – Sankarabharanam - Adi
6. Kannane en Kanavan - - Jaunpuri –Adi
7. Yaro Vandennai – Atana- Adi
8. Shanthi nilava vendum – Adi- Desh

Conclusion:

Adopting new trend is essential for the development of any art form. The art forms and musical forms will obsolete if they didn't adopt the new trends according to the change occurs in society in time to time. Influence of composers like Subrahmanya Bharathi and Suddhananda Bharathi influenced the music area as well as society. People get influenced by



these songs and the influence stood for a long period among the people. Social evils like caste based discriminations; theft, dowry system etc... were severely condemned by these composers through their compositions. Apart from devotion their concern about society and social issues were set a trend for other composers. Because of their influence many of the later composers included such social issues in their songs.

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