

VARNA'S IN PRAISE OF MOTHER GODDESS

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ABSTRACT

Music is a heavenly language and a powerful medium to illuminate exuberance of emotions. It reveals the melodic essence of beauty, joy and evokes every emotional element. Bhakthi is the fundamental element of carnatic music. If "Bhakthi" is the subject, the Dēvi bhakthi is an inevitable part of carnatic music. When it comes to upāsana, dēvi upāsana mārḡa is the most difficult one. Many of our great composers are dēvi upāsakās. There are plenty of compositions filled with distinctive features in praise of their "divine mother". Varṇa is also a musical form which has its own beautiful structure and a different variety. There are many composers who contribute many Dēvi varṇās using wide variety of rāga. But generally in varṇās male deities are mostly seen than praise of mother goddess. The prolific composers penned beautiful sāhitya with variegated colours of music through their excellent musical forms on their divine mother through different aspects. The worship of the female principle is one of the great concept of Hinduism. The worship of Dēvi is the most effective one and the methods of worship are really strong and are much very hard. This topic 'Varṇās in Praise of Mother Goddess' reveals the details of devi varnas through different composers in beautiful rāgās and tāḷās.

INTRODUCTION

Varṇa is one of the most well liked form which has its own coloured shape. It has an important place in abhyāsa gāna and sabha gāna. In a dance concert, a varṇa stands a great role as the primary item of the repertoire. It is a multi dimensional musical form which provide highly richness of bhāva with a beautiful melodic movement. There are different types of musical forms are existed in carnatic music. In most of the compositions, praising of Dēvi can be found. The presence of Dēvi can be seen in gītām, swarajathi, kṛti, rāgamālika, thillāna included in the Abhyāsagāna and sabhāgāna. Varṇa included in both abhyāsagana and sabhāgāna. When compared to other musical forms, Dēvi varṇās are very less in number. Very few varṇās could be seen during the period of the trinities. The development of the varṇa



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started after 20th century. Post trinity composers played a vital role by composing so many dēvi varṇās. Each varṇa is composed using varied rāgās and evoke great bhakthi with beautiful sāhitya. There are mostly tāna varṇās, apart from this, ada tāḷa varṇās, padha varṇās, dharu varṇās, rāgamālīka varṇās are also included.

DĒVI VARNĀS THROUGH DIFFERENT VĀGGĒYAKĀRĀS

Many Vāggēyakārās have created a lot of varṇās. Among these, Dēvi varṇās are less in number. But each varṇās are very beautiful and rich in bhāva with attractive sāhitya. Some of the composers and their varṇās are mentioned below.

Śyāmasāsthri (1762-1827, 18/19th century) done three varṇās. One tāna varṇa 'Dayānide māmava in Bēgada and two ada tāḷa varṇās 'Nīvegathiyani nēranamminānu in kalyāṇi and Nāmanavini vinuvēla in sourashtram'. An incredible speciality of the varṇās of Śyāmasāsthri is the emotional content of the sāhitya along with sangīta. Vīṇakuppayya (1798-1904, 18/19/20th century) credits one ada tāḷa varṇa in praise of dēvi 'Kamalākshi' in Yadukulakāmbhōji. Pattanam Subrahmanya Iyer (1845-1902, 19/20th century) also contributed one tāna varṇa and one ada tāḷa varṇa, Jalajākshi ninne in Chakravāka (ādi) and Nilūparāni mōhamute in Sankarabharanam. Tiger Varadāchāriar (1876-1950, 19/20th century) was the other composer who contributed 2 tāna varṇās in tamil, Karuṇaikadalē in kalyāṇi and Nerriravu kettirindu in vasantha. The next great composer was Muthayya Bhāgavathar (1877-1945, 19/20th century), who credits 3 tāna varṇās, 1 ada tāḷa varṇa and 2 dharu varṇās. Srī rāja māthangi in Sudhadhanyasi (ādi), Mahishasura mardhani in Andolika, Sri māta bala śailavīlasini in suddhasāveri, Sārasākshi in kalyāṇi (ada tāḷa), Sannutāngi srī chāmundēśwari in Vasantha (daru varṇa), and Māte malayadwaja in khamās (dharu). Pattamadai Ādi Krishnaiyyer (1897-1968, 19/20th century) composed 3 tāna varṇās in praise of dēvi, Sādhujana paripālīni in Gambhīranāṭṭa, sāmavēda rasikē in pharas, Mēgharanjani ganmr̥tavarsini in rāga mēgharanjani. These three varṇās are in Sanskrit. Varagūr Muthukumāra Swāmi (1902-1970, 20th century) composed 2 tāna varṇās, Veṅṅīratāmarai mēla vāzhum in pharas, Kamalāmanōhari in rāga kamalāmanōhari are the two varṇās. The next Composer is Cūddalōre .M. Subrahmaniyam (1920-1997, 20th century) was a prolific modern composer and a long standing AIR Artist. He has composed many dēvi varṇās compared to other modern composers. He composed 12 tāna varṇās and 1 ada tāḷa varṇa. List of the varṇās given below:-



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1. Nīrajākshi kāmākshi – Bahudāri
2. Dēvidayāpari śankari- Śuddhasāvēri
3. Nīrajalōchani niranjani – Ranjani
4. Sarasīruhāsana priyē – Lathāngi
5. Śrī Śāradē varadē – Abhēri
6. Kanjadalāyadākshi – Kāpi
7. Ninnē nammi nānu kāmākshi – kharaharaprya
8. Ninnē namminānu Gīrvani – kīravani
9. Dēvi mīnalōchani mām- Jaganmōhini
10. Nidu charanamuthe gathiyani- Vijayanāgari
11. Dēvi Gourimanōhari – Gourimanōhari
12. Paradēvathe varadē – Suddhadhanyāsi
13. Daya juda vamma dēvi nī nāpai – Śrīrāga – (Ada tāḷa)

Vīṇashēshanna(1850-1926,19/20th century) composed one Rāgamālika varṇa “Mahiṣāsura samhāriṇi” in Telugu set in Sankīrṇa Matya tāḷa . This is a rare piece .Kunrakkudi Krishnayer done a Pada varṇa in rāga kambhōji ‘Kāmākshi ninēkōri’ in Mīśra Jhampa tāḷa . There are many more prolific composers who have been composed dēvi varṇās .Lalgudi’s ‘Ankayārkaṇṇi’ is a best example of dēvi varṇa who depicted the navarasās of mother goddess through suitable rāgās . Among the pada varṇās , Balamuralikrishna’s ‘Amma ānandadāyini’ in rāga gambhīranāta placed a great role in both music and dance concert . Some other composers who have composed dēvi varṇās is listed below:-

- Thanjavūr Ponnayya (19th century)
- Kizhvēlūr Mīnākshi Sundaram Pillai(20th century)
- V.S Gōmathy Sankaraiyer(20th century)
- Chārumathy Rāmachandran(20/21st century)
- P.Vajravēlu Muddaliyar(20th century)
- R venugopal
- Pallavi Subbayya Bhāgavathar(19/20th century)
- Kalyāṇakrishna
- Mayūram Viśwanātha Śāstri (19/20th century)
- Subbarāma Dīkṣitar(19/20th Century)



- T.K Gōvindarao(20th century)

LYRICAL BEAUTY

Each varṇās are beautifully composed with very elegant dēvi synonyms . Śyāmasāstri's varṇās have a perfect essence and the content of the sāhitya is quite simple.He call Māyamma repeatedly in his varṇās. Repeating a particular sāhitya gives a rhythmic effect and give more attention to the meaning and music.

Eg: Nammithi Nammitinamma Māyamma(sourāshtram)

Muthayya Bhāgavathar's varṇās have also very beautiful sāhitya

Eg: Mahiṣāsūramardhani Mahābalādrivāsini

Mahipatinavathi śrīkrṣṇa

Mahārajēdra paripālīni śrī Harikēśha jayē gouri

It seems like a kṛti . Among the Varṇa composers , Cūddalōre M.Subrahmaniyam composed 12 tāna varṇās and 1 ada tālā varṇa .His sāhitya is very attract ive and one speciality in his varṇa is ;He call dēvi as Pathalīpuravāsini , Pathālīśapriyē,Pathālīpuranāyaki, etc.And also some of his varṇa he depicted the rāgamudra beautifully woven to the varṇa without diminishing any musical value .eg: Dēvi **Gourimanōhari** in Rāga Gourimanōhari , Ninne nammi nannu **gīrvani** in rāga kīravāṇi .The other composer Pattamadai Krishnayyar's tāna varṇa in Mēgharanjani , he penned the rāgamudra to the first line of the varṇa itself , 'Mēgharanjani gānāṃṣ tavarṣiṇi'.This is in sanskrit. GNB's **Ambōruhāsanajāye** in Ranjani,Balamuralikrishna's **Amma ānandadāyini** in Gambhīranāta, **Mathē malayadwaje** by Muthayya Bhāgavathar ,Lalgudi's **Ankayārkaṇṇi** are the wonderful examples which shows the confluence of sāhitya and sangītha in a great manner .In Ankayārkaṇṇi navarasa varṇa Lalgudi G Jayaraman depicted each rasa using the suitable rāgās with perfect sāhitya .

Mahākālī,kapālīni tṛṣūlini

Simhavāhini cinandezhunda

Kandamunda kodiya bandāsuranai

Khandatundamāi vdam śaida

These lyrics evoke roudra rasa,so he use Atāna rāga in this part.



CONCLUSION

From this study , it is clear that all of the composers have composed and expressed in variegated contours. Varṇa had undergone many changes over time. The evolution is take place after 20th century. The position of a usual varṇa to the current status by great composers is an important factor. Post Trinity composers have a great role for the development of varṇa . Their unique methods,ideas,rāga approach needs to be taken in to account .In varṇās ,praise of male deities are generally seen than female deities . There are Dēvi varṇās in various rāgās ,rare rāgās and different tālās . Many more composers may have done varṇās praise of mother goddess but this paper has been attempted a small review of the details of some dēvi varṇās on the available datas.Each varṇās emanate pure bhakthi for the divine mother ,through simple and pleading words and also composed in brilliant rāgās ,which provide a great musical treat to all musical lovers and Dēvi upāsakās .The content of the varṇās of different composers are almost similar with different perceptions of bhakthi.

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