



## Analysis of the Lyrical Content of the compositions of Papanasam Sivan

**Dr. Ratheesh P R**

**Associate Professor Department of Music  
Central University of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvarur  
Email: ratheeshpr@cutn.ac.in**

### Abstract

Papanasam Sivan was a renowned composer of Karnataka music known for his unique style and contributions to the genre. Papanasam Sivan's compositions are often known for their brevity and simplicity. He had a knack for expressing profound emotions and ideas concisely. His compositions are deeply emotional and often reflect devotion and love for deities. Sivan had a special talent for evoking powerful emotions in his compositions. He composed in various South Indian languages, including Tamil and Sanskrit, which contributed to the diversity of his works. Papanasam Sivan's compositions cover a wide range of raga-s and tala-s. He was versatile in choosing the right raga and tala to suit the mood and theme of each composition. This paper analyses the lyrical content of some of the compositions of Papanasam Sivan in various aspects.

Keywords: *Krti, Pallavi, Anupallavi, Carana, Madhyamakala*

### Introduction

Most of Papanasam Sivan's compositions adhere to the krti pattern. Usually, the structure of the compositions of Papanasam Sivan comes under two types. Most of the compositions are in the form of pallavi, anupallavi and single carana. In these types, pallavi, anupallavi and carana have different dhruva. But the ending portion of anupallavi and carana have the same dhruva which connects to the pallavi. For example, '*Devi niye tunai*' in the raga Kiravani. Some of his compositions have similarity with the compositions of Tyagaraja. For example, '*Karpakame*' in the raga Madhyamavati in which all the three sections have different dhruva. But the carana is presented in madhyamakala like the krti '*Yocana kamala locana*' of Tyagaraja.

There is another type of krti-s composed by Papanasam Sivan in which the sections pallavi, anupallavi and multiple carana-s will occur. The carana-s will be having different dhruva. For example, krti '*Enna tavam seytanai*' in the raga Kapi in which all the sections have different dhruva parts.

### Melody and lyrics in the krti-s of Papanasam Sivan

Papanasam Sivan have composed krti-s in the raga-s common to the system of Karnataka music. Apart from these raga-s he has incorporated many raga-s from Hindustani music like Behag, Kapi, Des, Mand, Bhimplas etc.

Papanasam Sivan is an expert in using literary beauties like prasa, repetition of same words as an attachment to make another similar word. For example, '*Ma ramanan uma ramanan*' in the raga Hindolam. This krti is in Rupaka tala 2 kala. Krti starts in Sama eduppu. In the word uma ramanan, the syllable 'ma' comes in Sama of second avarta. In anupallavi also he has incorporated the same beauty as, '*mara janakan kumara janakan*'. The pallavi of the krti starts in svarakshara beauty.

Papanasam Sivan has offered several patterns in krti's musical framework as well. Certain krti-s contain dhruva repeated several times, while other krti-s do not. He has adhered to Tyagaraja and Dikshita's styles in this regard. Like Dikshita's krti-s, most of his compositions have distinct dhruva

parts for pallavi, anupallavi, and carana. The music of the anupallavi is repeated in the second part of the carana in most krti-s with dhatu repetition, as in the krti-s of Tyagaraja.

Papanasam Sivan is well aware that tempo changes within a composition add variety and vitality. This provides a quick flow in contrast to the previous section and a strong conclusion for the whole piece. Sivan had introduced the madhyamakala part of his krti-s with great care. Madhyamakala can occur in carana alone or in anupallavi and carana in certain krti-s. The whole carana may occasionally be in madhyamakala.

Papanasam Sivan is unusual in this regard because he presents a variety of patterns. Many of his compositions have made their way into the Indian film industry. His songs have been adapted and used in numerous South Indian films.

### **Lyrical Content and Structure**

Lyrics refers to the meaningful text in a krti and it is one of the important aspects in a composition, since it serves as the vehicle of communication of the composition to a listener. Lyrical content of the song plays a crucial role by conveying the message and emotions incorporated in the sahitya. Beyond conveying emotions and messages, lyrics contribute to the overall structure and flow of the composition. The structure of sahitya allows the performer to express themselves creatively and connect with listeners on various levels.

#### **a. Combination of Pallavi and Anupallavi as a single whole**

Each krti begins with the pallavi and is followed by the anupallavi. The composer presents in such a way that the pallavi and the anupallavi are related to each other. In some cases, the meaning of the pallavi is complete within itself. Anupallavi meanwhile supports or supplements the theme of the pallavi. In these, the pallavi and the anupallavi are interconnected by means of the melody because the ending of the anupallavi connects to pallavi. In this manner the anupallavi leads to the pallavi of the song.

#### ***Pirava varam tarum***

Papanasam Sivan, popularly known as ‘Tamil Tyagayya’ has composed krti-s following the style of Tyagaraja. One of his compositions, ‘*Pirava varam tarum*’, in the raga Latangi, he says, Pallavi

*Pirava varam tarum pemmane*

Please bless me so that I will not have to be born again.

Anupallavi

*Pirava varam tarum iraiva marupadi*

*Pirava varam tarum pirandalun thiruvadai*

*marava varam tarum manila melinip – (pirava varam)*

In the anupallavi, he clarifies the statement mentioned in the pallavi by requesting God to grant him the boon of not to be born again and in case there is another birth at least grant him the boon of not ever forgetting the God in his thoughts in this land. By this portion only the meaning gets completed.

#### **b. Combination of words in the Sahitya**

In Sanskrit and Tamil, it is quite common to have words independent by themselves and some occurring as compound words. Sometimes, the composer pens the lyrics such that the proper combination of the words occurring in the sahitya would add to its structure and melodic effects. Another feature of the similar kind is the construction of the words in accordance with prosodical beauties like, antaryukti, padaccheda, anuprasa and so on. It is to be noted that all these features



and combination of words go with the tala framework in very smooth manner. Some illustrations of this kind are given below.

### ***Ka va va kanda va va***

This is a composition of Papanasam Sivan in the raga Varali set to adi tala. This is an example for the krti having sahitya syllable which could be attached to repeat the avarta-s.

Pallavi

*Ka va va kanda va va enai  
ka va velava pazhanimalai uraiyu muru- (ga va va)*

In the pallavi, composer prays to Lord Muruga, who resides in Pazhani Malai, to come to protect him.

Anupallavi

*Devadidevan magane va – para  
Devi madiyilamarum guhane va valli-  
Deivayanai manavala va – sara  
Vanabhava paramadayala shanmu - (kha va va)*

The anupallavi is stuffed with attributes of Lord Muruga and the section ends with word ‘shanmu’ which merges the starting of pallavi as ‘Shanmu-kha’.

Usually, the word, or synonym of Lord Muruga, Shanmukha is attached to the end of avarta to connect to the starting of the song which give a charm to the composition both lyrical and melodic point of view.

### ***Appan avataritta kathamrtam***

This is a krti in the raga Kharaharapriya and adi tala composed by Papanasam Sivan in praise of Lord Ayyappa of Sabarimala. Here, the word ‘appan’ refers to Lord Ayyappa. Each section of this song ends with the syllable ‘ai’, when it joins with the pallavi it becomes Ayyappan. The particular sahitya syllable ‘ai’ has the melody (m g r s) which beautifully merges with the rshabha on which the song starts.

Pallavi

*Appan avataritta kathamrtam - iv  
akhilam uyya vilainta adbhitam - ai (appan)*

The pallavi of the krti announces the nectarine story of the birth of Ayyappa.

According to Hindu mythology, Lord Ayyappa was born Hariharaputra, the son of Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu. Mahishi, the she-buffalo demoness and sister of Mahishasura, sought revenge for her brother’s murder at the hands of Goddess Parvati in her Durga form. Recognizing that only a superhuman strength could vanquish Mahishi, the Devas turned to Goddess Durga, who killed Mahishasura in a battle. Ayyappa then played a critical role in putting an end to evil’s horror by slaying Mahishi, so releasing people who had previously been cursed.

Anupallavi

*Muppuvanankalai vattum mahishamukhi  
Muthalarakkar karuvarukka varum ai (appan)*

Carana



*Mohini vadivukol malar kannan- azhakil  
Moham kondu kalanthan - mukkannan- tri  
Loka mangalakara murtti - manikandan  
Uyar tiru sasthayenum peyarodum ai (appan)*

Both anupallavi and carana deal with the attributes of Lord Ayyappa and both sections getting connected to pallavi with the sahitya attachment.

### c. Usage of similes or related statements

It is seen that in some compositions the composer expresses his views in the pallavi. To emphasize the same, he uses similes or proverbs or statements which appear to be independent but actually related to the main theme.

#### *Nambikkettavar evarayya*

In the krti Nambikkettavar in the raga Hindolam and adi tala by Papanasam Sivan. The statement that the composer mentions in the pallavi, is an independent one. But whatever he says in anupallavi and carana are related to the theme of the pallavi.

#### Pallavi

*Nambikkettavar evarayya – umai  
Nayakanai tirumayilaiyin iraivanai*

In the pallavi, the composer asks, “O Lord Siva, who has suffered because they believed in you, the one who is the husband of Uma, dwells in Tirumayil?”

#### Anupallavi

*Ambuli gangai aninda jadadharan  
Anbar manam valar sambu kabaliyai - (Nambikkettavar)*

In the anupallavi composer gives some attributes of Lord Siva with Ganga River on his matted hair and crescent moon adorning his forehead. He requests Lord Siva to grant the wishes for those who adore Him.

#### Carana

*Ondrume payan illaiyendru unarndapinbavar undenbar  
Ovvoru manitanum orunal innilai yeiduvaduruti idai marantar  
Andru seyalazhindala marupozhutu sivan peyar navil varate  
Adalinal maname indre sila namam sollipazhagu anbudan - (Nambikkettavar)*

In the carana, the composer mentions some of facts in the Universe in connection with the text of the previous sections of this song. He says, people who understand that nothing made in the universe exists, but they will eventually come to the Lord. All people eventually must leave this stage of life, but they tend to overlook this fundamental fact. They won't be able to call God's name with their tongue on that day when their body and speech finally give out. Thus, begin now, O mind, preparing for that eventuality, by developing the habit of lovingly and consistently standing by Siva's name.

### d. Krti gets strength with a lesser number of Sahitya Akshara

When the letters (sahitya akshara-s) are less in any section of the compositions, there should be lots of melody materials packed inside. There is a lot of space between the sahitya akshara. We can't find the same case in the whole song.

#### *Kapali*

In the pallavi of the composition ‘*Kapali*’ in the raga Mohana and adi Tala composed by Papanasam Sivan, there is only one avarta. Puravanga of the first avarta consists of the word ‘*Kapali*’. The sangati-s range from mandra sthayi dhaivata to tara sthayi gandhara.

<i>g , , , p , , , r , s , s d s r</i>	<i>g , , , d p d p r r , s , s d s r</i>
<i>ka- - - pa- - - li- - - - - -</i>	<i>ka- - - pa- - - li- - - - - -</i>
<i>g , rg p , gp d p r , s , s d s r</i>	<i>g , rg p , gpdsdp r , s , s d s r</i>
<i>ka- - - pa- - - li- - - - - -</i>	<i>ka- - - pa- - - li- - - - - -</i>
<i>g , , , p d s d p r , s , , , ,</i>	<i>p d s d d p p g g g d p g r s r</i>
<i>ka- - - pa- - - li- - - - - -</i>	<i>karunainilavupozhivadanamadiyanoru</i>

The pallavi itself gives a complete picture of the raga with a minimum sahitya akshara-s. The pallavi ‘*Kapali karunai nilavu pozhi vadana madiyan oru*’ is distributed in one avarta. Half of the avarta occupies the word ‘*Kapali*’ only. The remaining six words come in the uttaranga.

Papanasam Sivan has given a clear picture of raga Mohana in the pallavi itself. He incorporated the method of developing sangati-s in between the sahitya syllables (purvanga of first avarta) and with sahitya syllables (uttaranga of first avarta). Pallavi of this krti is a good example for applying melody in dirgha and hrasva akshara-s.

### Conclusion

The compositions of Papanasam Sivan exhibit a distinctive structure in their pallavi, anupallavi, and carana, each conveying a distinctive idea and constituting a form of artistic poetry. Depending on the amount of avarta-s and the meaning of the sahitya, there are occasionally clever ways to combine them. Since a form of bondage is created, two, four, or more avartas in a portion cannot be separated. Thus, this study has made an attempt to analyse the sahitya of the compositions with regard to the meaning and how the content of the sahitya has been distributed in each section blended with melody.

### References

1. Dr. Rukmani Ramani, “Brahmasri Papanasam Sivan Kirtana Malai” Published by Tamil Nadu Musical Theatre Forum, Part 1-6, 1934.
2. T Nilayatakshi, “Kirtana Malai”, Compositions of Papanasam Sivan, Alliance Company Mylapore, Chennai-4, 1949.
3. “Kirtanamalai”, Brahmajnana Press, Adyar, Chennai, 1939.
4. Rukmini Ramani, Brahmasri Papanasam Sivan Kirtana Malai, Part 3- First Section, 50 Kirthanaigal, The India Printing Works, Mylapore, Chennai, 1983.
5. A. K Raveendranath, Dakshinendian Sangeetham (Malayalam), Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, 1985.