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COMPOSITIONS OF PAPANASAM SIVAN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KRITI 'KAPALI' RAGA – MOHANAM, TALA - ADI

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ABSTRACT

Papanasam Ramayya Sivan was a versatile Indian Composer of Carnatic Music and Singer. He was born in 1890 in Polagam in erstwhile Tanjore District of the State of Tamil Nadu. He lived for a long period in Thiruvananthapuram, the then Travancore in his childhood days. Noorani Mahadeva Bhagavathar and Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, A well-known musician were his gurus. He used "Ramadasa" as the mudra for his compositions. Being a multi lingual personality, he has composed krithis both in Tamil and Sanskrit language. He was also associated with Tamil film industry. He has composed many krithis in different ragas of popular and rare variety. His krithis are known for its reach treasure of ragabhava. Papanasam Sivan is popularly known as Tamizh Tyagaraja. The excellent combination of music and text are the noteworthy feature of his compositions. Simplicity and high-flown melody are the salient features of his compositions. These compositions ranging from varna to krithis are still shining in the realm of Carnatic Music with its own majestic beauty.

Method of Study: Analytical Method is employed for this study.

Keywords: Papanasam, Tamizh Tyagaraja, Bhagavathar, Ragabhava, Mohanam, Kapali

Lyrics

Pallavi

kApAli karuNaAi nilavu pozhi
vadanamadiyan oru

Anupallavi

A bAla gOpalam Azhi shUzh
Talattavarum bhUpAlarum aSTadik
pAlarum pOTrum adbhuta

Carana

matipunal aravu konrai tumbai
arugum mattaipunai mAshaDaiyAn
vidhi talaimAlai mArban uritta kariyin



vempuliyin tOluDaiyAn
adhira muzhangum uDukkaiyum
trishulamu ankiyum kurangamum
ilangiDu kaiyAn
dyutimighu tirumEni muzhudum
shAmba tulanga edir mangaiyar
manam kavar jagan mOana

An Overview of the Composition:

Kapali, a composition by Papanasam Sivan in the raga Mohanam set to Adi tala is an outstanding composition in Carnatic Music. It describes Lord Siva – Kapaleeswarar, in an amazing way. There exists a contrast as the fierce form of the lord Siva is depicted with a soothing melody, like raga Mohanam. There is an excellent coincidence of devotion and wonder, here the lyrics present a powerful imagery of Lord Siva as Kapali, adorned with snake and skull, but music adorns him as a figure of kindness and beauty. Here we can find the ultimate contemplation.

Musical Analysis - Pallavi

Kapali, the most popular and marvellous composition in the raga Mohanam composed by legendary composer Papanasam Sivan is an ever-green gem in the realm of Kalpitha Sangeetha branch of Carnatic Music. This composition is a road map to ragalapana, the most important component under improvised music. At the very commencement, when we analyse the movement of Pallavi, the first variation itself is the fantastic example of how to start the raga Mohana. e.g., The melodious progression of sangathis or musical movements are shining as the outstanding features of musical and rhythmical mastery of the legendary composer. After learning Pallavi thoroughly, one can experience the pleasing nuances and embellishments of the raga Mohana. This will pave the way for enhancement of improvisation. Each line of this composition is having the remarkable essence of raga Mohana.

This composition stands as an ample resource for extensive exploration of the raga. The first sangathi is a fine introduction to ragalapana as it starts with G.....P.....R. S – the most suitable commencing note of Mohana is Gandhara. The vibrant Gandhara itself can bring out the very essence of the raga in a great way. Musicians used to start Mohana with the same phrase as the commencement of Pallavi. From beginning, it is gradually and melodically moving along with all nuances and ornamentations. Pallavi, Anupallavi, and Carana are the excellent examples for the remarkable undercurrent rhythmical excellence of chaturasra nada. Though this Kṛiti is set to Aadi, two Kalai, its inner most rhythmic feeling is same as madhyamakala or medium tempo. This is a rare feature in compositions in Carnatic Music. Papanasam Sivan, popularly known as Tamizh Tyagaraja has composed many compositions in popular and rare ragas. All compositions stand as a typical example for the combination of music and text. Rich musical, melodic and rhythmical components elevate his compositions to such a musical height. After learning the 4 sangathis or musical variations in Pallavi portion, one will be able to understand the core of the melody of Mohana in its real sense.



When we traverse in between the sangathis or musical variations of this composition, one can realise the aesthetic beauty of this wonderful raga. In Pallavi the excellent 4 or 5 sangathis can bring out the whole impact of the raga as they are considered as the pillars of the composition. From Pallavi itself, we can find the outstanding progression of melodies with an enchanting beauty. First and second sangatis are just an introduction to Mohana as how to start. G..P..R.S, G..P.. DDP GR. S, G.RGP....GPD...P, etc....After this soothing start , there is an excellent progression of elongated sangatis like , GR, PG, DP, ŚD, ŘŚ...etc. In the second line of the Pallavi , “Karunai nilavu “we can find the intricate groupings of the phrases like ŚŘĠ., ŘŚŘ. , ŚDRŚ, DPD. PD, ŘŚŘ, DŚP-(Vadanamadiyanoru).

Serenity of Raga Mohanam - Anupallavi

The majestic starting of Anu Pallavi - with the phrase G... P.. D.Ś..Ġ Ř., Ġ., (A paala Gopaala) is a fine indication about the importance of Dhaivatha and Rishabha in Mohanam, especially Rishabha in upper octave. These two svaras are having the wonderful melodic combination. Here we can also find the excellent beauty of Shadja as it shines more in the prayoga - D.. Ś.DŚ.. Ś.DŚ... (Bhoopalarum). All these phrases are having the beautiful ornamentations also. After this, there is a beautiful descending melodic phrase – Ř.ĠŘ, Ś.ŘŚ, D.ŚD, P.DP, and it slowly merges with chittasvara or mukthayi svara. Here we can find the magic of inner most micro tones which are solely responsible for giving the individual colour or bhava to each raga. These micro tones are meticulously incorporated in divergent manner by each composer. This diversity in music irrespective of its genre is the hallmark of our Indian Music.

Exuberant Beauty of Gandhara and Dhaivath - Chittasvara

In chittasvara, the vibrant Gandhara and Dhaivatha of Mohana are shining as the most powerful stars in the galaxy. Gandhara and Dhaivatha are dealing with various combinations of phrases emanating from different points. Each combination has its own identical features which are beautifully blended. Eg, G.. PGR SR D...- In this phrase the first Gandhara is in middle octave with its traditional fervour and the Dhaivatha is in Lower octave with a powerful form are having the different oscillations which gives a special charm to this krithi . In the second phase , GPD ŚŘD., ĠŘŚ DPD. In the prayoga ŚŘD... dhaivatha is evolving from Rishabh is an amazing melodious downward movement. These are all typical nature of raga Mohanam which are skilfully employed in this krithi.

An overwhelming Musical and Rhythmical embellishments - Carana

The carana of this composition is known for its rich treasure of embellishments both in musical and rhythmical aspects. After mind blowing Pallavi and serene Anupallavi, the carana has its own alluring nuances. From beginning itself the movement of music and rhythm are full of melodious blending. For e.g., PPPP, PDŚ DDP,- (Mathipunal..). GGPĐ, ŚŘŚ, ŚDP- (Vidhi thalai) here, there is an enchanting rhythmical extravaganza of chaturasra nada, like TH KA DHI MI in captivating form. The lyrics starting from (“Athira muzhangum...angiyum, kurangavum.) Here also, there is an interesting “Gathi” variety or gathi bheda. The chaturasra and Tisra nada are interwoven. Here we can enjoy the beautiful combination of “THAKATHIMI TAKITA” – the fabulous beauty of



chaturasra and tisra . Throughout carana, the overwhelming melodic and rhythmic embellishments make this fantastic Kriti a real treasure of excellence.

Conclusion

The legendary composer, Papanasam Ramaiyya Sivan, popularly known as Papanasam Sivan has kept a unique place in the realm of Carnatic Music with his own majestic style. His compositions are noteworthy for its rich musical, melodic, poetical and rhythmical manifestations. His compositions are widely performed by musicians in music concerts. His simple and appealing style make his compositions as an ever-green gems in the world of music.

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