

Compositions of Mysore Veena Seshanna

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Abstract:

Many vaggayakaras are known for their work in karnatic music, veena seshanna was one of them. he belongs to mysore. he is a vainika(veena). so the name veena came as surname seshanna. he composed jatiswaras, varnas, krities, and thillanas. this paper is a small analysis of them.

Keywords: Veena, Jatiswaras, Varnas, Krities, Thillanas, Janaka Raga, Janya Raga, Tala

Introduction:

It was that period when Tanjavur and Mysore were considered as the sacred abodes of music. Tanjavur was known for its renowned vocalists while Mysore ruled in the segment of instrumentalist, Veena. Seshanna was one of the prominent instrumentalists of Veena who carved the glory of Mysore in the music world and titles as “vainika shikhamani”

Compositions:

Seshanna was a great musician. He wrote extensively, on music, in Telugu and Kannada. One can see the glimpse of his style “Sesha”, “Seshadasa”, “Seshagiri”, in his writings. His writings encompass:

Jatiswara - 12

Varna - 9

Krithi - 16

Thillanas - 17

Jatiswaras:

He authored 12 Jatiswaras which can be played on Veena. These include the Janaka ragas like Sankharabharanam, Karharapriya, Vanasapati, Manavati and Jatiswaras in Janu raga like Bhairavi, Karnataka kapi, Kambhoji, Jhanjati, Behag, Neelambari, Mohana, Khamas. There are in the ragas of Vilamba, Madhya and Doorita. The Jatiswaras (in Janta and Dhaatu swaras) authored swaras by him encompass melodious tunes with a sort of western style. In the Karnataka Kapi Jatiswara fifth stanza, he authored, “Pa Ma Pa Da Ri Sa Ma Ri”, “Ma Ri Pa Ma Da Pa Ri Sa” are exceptionally melodious. In Kambhoji there are 9 stanzas. They were written in synchronization with “Syama sastry” “Bhairavi swarajati” “Kamakshi” series. The 7th and 8th stanza of “Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Da Ni Sa” were written in Nishada and the 9th stanza starts with high octave Shadjama. In the 7th stanza the “Srothu vahayati” is seen.

Ni Da Pa

Sa Ni Da Pa

Ri Sa Ni Da Pa

Ga Ri Sa Ni Da Pa

Ma Ga Ri Sa Ni Da Pa

Have not only have Talas of Chathusra, Tiputa Roopaka but also Khanda, Ata and Sankeerna Triputa.

Varna:

He authored all 9 Varnas in Telugu. Except for Thodi raga all others are in Janya ragas. The composition also has 2 Raga Maalika varnas. However, these Raga Maalika varnas are in one raga all through except the last swara which will be in Aavrutha Swara. He has written it in various ragas. In Behag Raga Maalika varna there are ragas like Malavikasri, Aabherini and Kokila. Similarly in Begada Raga Maalika varna along with Ghana Pancha ragas there are Chayalaga Ragas and Ragas like Poorvi, Chitta, Mohini.

Abherini Raga was the creation of Veena Seshanna. It was also observed that he was a proponent of Ragas like Kokila and Chitta Mohini. All varnas have five high octave swaras. However, there are 4 high octave swaras in Kedara raga varna and 6 high octaves in Jhalavaraali raga varna.

1. Gaana loludyna -Thodi - Khanda Dhruva Thaalam
2. Sarasijaakshi - Kedaram - Khand Aata Thaalam.
3. Kamasatha koti - Jhalavarali - Chathusra Triputa Thaalam
4. Saami nine nammi - Purva Kalyani - Khanda Triputa Thaalam
5. Kaam koti Sundara - Ragamaalika varnam - Behag – Misra Triputa Thaalam
6. Mayamela ra - Nata kurunji – Khanda Triputa Thaalam
7. Mahishaasura – Ragamaalika varnam – Begada – Sankeerna Matya Thaalam
8. Neerajaakshi – Saaveri – Misra Jhampa Thaalam
9. Ninne nammi yunnadira - Deva Gandhaari – Khanda Aata Thaalam

Kruties:

16 kruthis. He has written 11 in Telugu and 5 in Kannada.

Telugu:

1. Sripathey - Gaanamoorthi - Roopaka Thaalam

2. Raamaabhi Raama - Dhenuka – Roopaka Thaalam
3. Sadaasiva Ninne - Naataka Priya - Khanda Priya Thaalam
4. Gangadhara - Gouri - Roopaka Thaalam
5. Raama Ninnu - Anand Bhairavi – Roopaka Thaalam
6. Thaamasambu - kambhoji - Roopaka Thaalam
7. Ubhaya kaaveri - Gamasrama - Roopaka Thaalam
8. Tharamu gaadura – Dharmavati – Chathusra Triputa Thaalam
9. Intha sodhanamu – Rishabha Priya – Roopaka Thaalam
10. Yemani Thelupudura – Vachaspati – Chathusra Thriputa Thaalam
11. Ninnu Choosi - Hemavati – Roopaka Thaalam

Kruthis were mostly written in Janaka ragas. Only Gouri, Ananda Bhairavi and kambhoji were written in Janu ragas. There are more than one kruthis in “Sripatheey”. Only in “Gangadhara” there is “Chitti swaram”. All kruthis are in madhyama kaala except “Yemi delpudura” Vachaspati kruti which is in Vilambham.

Kannada:

1. Yennedu pogalaali – Naaganaama kriya – Misradhaapu Thaalam
2. Ghana vaada ninna – Kambhoji – Misradhaapu Thaalam
3. Siriye tvaritadi – Janjjaati – Chathusra triputa Thaalam
4. Kaapad Beku – Khamaas – Misradhaapu Thaalam
5. Saarade Varade – Kalyaani – Roopaka Thaalam

All the above resemble the Devaranaamas chanted by Haridaasas. They have Pallavi, Anu Pallavi and have 6 to 7 stanzas Charanam). Seshanna has written almost all Kruthis in Roopaka Thaalam. They are 9 of these. 3 each of Misra Dhaapu and Chathusra Triputa and 1 of Khanda Triputa.

Thillanas:

Seshanna has written 17 thillanas and dedicated them to Chamaraja Wadiyar. The legend has it that, once Seshanna needed money and requested Chamaraja Wadiyar for Rs 800/-. Chamaraja Wadiyar offered help but in the form of loan which must be repaid. However, the money was not arranged even after the lapse of 15 days. Dismayed and distressed Seshanna stopped going to the king's court. He wrote the thillana "Nadir Dhithom" in Pharag raga, gave it to Bakshi Subbanna and requested him to sing it in the king's court. Pleased with the thillana Chamaraja Wadiyar gave Rupees 800 to Seshanna as a gift.

All thillanas written by Seshanna attained popularity. The writing in these thillanas seemingly appear to be questioning the king. The famous Jhamjhaati thillana mentions the gift of rupees 800 given to him by the king.

He has written thillanas in Janaka ragas like Sankarabharanam, Thodi, Kanada, Kedara, and in Hindustani ragas like Behag, Hindustani kapi, Jhamjhaati. However, all his writings were in Kannada Thaalas except Poorvi raga thillana which is in Hindustani raga Choutaal.

Conclusion:

Veena. Seshanna was one of the prominent instrumentalists of Veena who carved the glory of Mysore in the music world and titles as "vainika shikhamani". He composed Jatiswara - 12, Varna - 9, Krithi - 16, Thillanas - 17. Abherini raga was his creation. Apart from Veena, Seshanna could also play violin, Jaltarang, Rudra veena, Surabaath and Piano. He was the first person of Mysore who learnt how to play a Jaltarang.

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