

Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras 600 017

37th GOKULASHTAMI SANGEETHA UTSAVAM
Extracts from Lecture Demonstration

Sangeethamum Sahityamum

by *Lalgudi G. Jayaraman*

At the outset the convenor of the lecture demonstration sessions Tanjore S. Kalyanaraman welcomed Lalgudi Jayaraman and the gathering.

Lalgudi Jayaraman dwelt at length on the topic 'Sangeethamum Sahithyamum'. He stressed the importance of melody set in any language, comparing the heart beat of the human body. "Melody has no language barriers". He proved this by referring to the film 'Sankara Bharanam' in which Samaja Varagamana, Brocheva, Manasa Sancharare and Paluke Bangara which gained popularity due to importance of melody. The lay people started appreciating carnatic music thro' this medium. Demands of these songs were made constantly to be sung on the concert platforms. Though the picture was in Telugu it had wonderful reception in Tamilnadu, Kerala, Karnataka and also in the North.

About half a century ago Vedanayagam Pillay, the Tamil composer catered to people of all religions with his Karunalaya Nidhiyae, Innamum Thamadhama, Udhavi Seyyalaghada. The first method to cater to all types of listeners is always to give importance to the names of several Gods. Involvement of the

people is achieved by this though the quality of music takes the second place. But the lyrics and appropriate tune combined create divinity in Music attracting all people. Sringara Rasa also attracts people thro' lyrics.

A special mention was made of Mahadi Hasan's Gayals for his sublime accuracy in melody. Irrespective of the language which they were tuned all were crazy of the melody contents.

Language is only a entry door to any chaste music. When a song is tuned it should be done assimilating and reflecting the meaning and Bhava aspect throughout.

He demonstrated by singing assisted by his disciple S.P. Ramh - Brova Barama, Makelara, Etula Brothuvo. The progressive sangathis for the tunes are totally illustrating the Bhava or feelings of the Sahithyams. By changing the Anuswaram different effects are created and one has to choose the proper Anuswarams and embellishment to heighten the effect.

He sang the compositions of Music Trinity and Papanasam Sivan, Gopalakrishna Bharathy and referred to Husseni Raga tuned by Ariyakudi

Ramanuja Iyengar. Husseni reflects Sringara Rasa for the songs Enani Veguthine and Eppadi Manam. Pathos or Sogha rasa is provided with marvellous effect. He sang his own Pada Varnam to demonstrate the different effects created by the choice of words employed in the Sahityam.

Sri T.S. Balakrishna Sastrigal, the Harikatha exponent, dwelt on 'The Greatness of the Sahityas of Sangeetha Thirumurthigal'.

Greatness is a quality that exudes excellence surpassing eminence. In the case of the Music Trinity of Tiruvarur Shyama Sastry, Thyagaraja and Muthuswamy Dikshithar in chronological order each was great *per se* as greatness was born with them. They shone and continue to shine on the Music horizon by their exemplary lives as evidenced by their soul lifting outpourings. And their language couched in permuted Swara combinations had and has an irresistible appeal in it. They were 'Jeevanmukthas' acquiring 'Brahmagnanam' and 'Atmagnanam' which are what are reflected in their compositions.

God addicts as they were, each had his own Ishtadevata, (Ambal for Shyama Sastry, Rama for Thyagajara and Subramanya for Dikshithar) whose form and traits he had extolled in his Kritis. Thyagaraja and Dikshithar had also sung on other gods and goddesses. The Bakthi rasa that filled the creations of these three masters descriptions what is noteworthy is that each exhibited his devotion in a different way, said the lecturer. While

Shyama Sastry expressed his Bakthi replete with Vatsalya Bhava 'Brovevamma Tamasamae' that of a child to his mother, a plea for succour, those of Thyagaraja were executed in and were resplendent with the Nayaki Bhava, the soul yearning for union with the Supreme and Muthuswamy Dikshithar exemplified the Guru Sishya Bava as seen in his Mudra 'Guru Guha'.

A special feature which marked the Sahityas particularly of Thyagaraja and Dikshithar was that they implied several Purana rahasyas not easily available to the lay. They also extolled the efficacy of Nama Sankeertanam. Thyagaraja also laid stress in his compositions on the need to exercise control on mind as shown for instance in his Kritis 'Manasulipa' 'Manesa Swadeenemai'. His life epitomised the virtues of Vairagya (as of Sukha) and Ananya Bakthi (as of Prahlada).

Sri Sastrigal concluded his exposition with an anecdote of a meeting between Thyagaraja and Muthuswamy Dikshithar when the former pleaded with the latter to sing a piece on Rama. Obligingly Dikshithar came out with the memorable piece 'Mamava Pattabhirama' which strongly coincided with the Saint's own parayanam of the Pattabhishekam canto in Srimad Ramayanam of Valmiki. Earlier that day Dikshithar in turn requested Thyagaraja to sing on his own Ishta Devata which brought forth from the latter the priceless piece of 'Koluvaunnade'. Even as the former Kritis figured with 'akshara samruddi' the latter flowered with 'aakara samruddi'.

On the third lecture demonstration session on 9th August 1992, Palghat K.V. Narayanaswamy dwelt on the concert pattern evolved by Ariyakudi.

"There is music in all things if men had ears" said Lord Byron. But to those to whom it is sheer bliss to hear soul stirring music experience its passage down to the very vitals of their being. It was here that Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar's brilliance came to the fore. It was he who regulated the extended Kutcheries of earlier years to half their duration without sacrificing their quality and diversity or losing their proportion. He had the genius to choose the right songs best suited to the occasion and to the audience so as to please the lay as well as the learned. He knew how to modulate his voice and how to make the performance audience-oriented. Having captured the attention of his listeners he had also the capacity to keep them in his grip.

It stood to the credit of Ariyakudi, Narayanaswamy said, that he raised the status of music from being a medium of Sugaanubhavam to the position as a means of offering full aesthetic enjoyment to his listeners. Beginning with a varnam, he passed on to a few Madyamakala Kritis, did a Pallavi mostly in 4-Kalai chavukkam followed by Neraval and Swara Prayogas, took up a Javali and a Padam that went on to a verse from

Tiruppavai, Tevaram or Tiruppugazh or a piece from Rama Natakam and concluded with a Tillana and a Sloka in Sanskrit. That way he evolved a concert pattern allowing for a variety of songs to be handled and that came to be adopted by musicians subsequently. Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar was very particular about Kaalapramanam. There was Akshara Suddam in his pronunciation. His rendition was totally free of .Gayaka Dosham. He gave equal prominence to Tamil songs even before the Tamil Isai Movement was started. He employed Sangathis in exact measure without under utilisation or over emphasis. He handled the more popular ragas generally such as Pantuvarali, Todi, Bairavi, Kalyani, Kamboji, Yadukula Kamboji etc. When he did take up an apoorva raga he confined himself to the rendition of the Keertana. Speaking in glowing terms of his master and mentor, Narayanaswamy said that the former had attained Poornatvam as a Nadayogi. That was the ultimate to him and music was his very breath and life force. Ramanuja Iyengar is dead and he was brought back to life by his chela through modelling his own way of singing after his guru's Bani.

Earlier welcoming the lecturer, Convenor Tanjore S. Kalyanaraman said there was lack of proportion in the Kutcheri setup before Ramanuja Iyengar's time which he corrected in tune with modern trends. □