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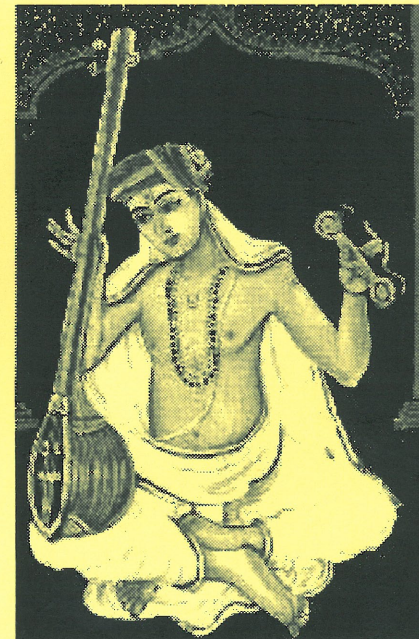
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Thyagaraja Aradhana

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The Greatness of Thyagaraja

What makes him unique?

Rasikan

A few years ago, I wrote an article in Sruti Ranjani asking, "Is Thyagaraja really great?" It was a tongue-in-the cheek article written in the ninda-sthuthi form. The answer, of course, is while other composers may be great in specific aspects of S. Indian music, it is Thyagaraja who excelled in all aspects of the art form.

The compositions in S. Indian music, in general emphasize the devotional part of music. Most of them are in praise of Gods or Goddesses, extolling their achievements and beseeching their favors. However, Thyagaraja, in many of his kritis, also spoke of ethical/moral values, raised philosophical discussion, and touched even of mundane aspects from events in daily life without losing the musical ideas.

He introduced many innovations in his compositions while maintaining tradition. His influence has been so pervasive that one can say that the present day S. Indian music is indeed Thyagaraja music.

Recently Dr. T. Sarada, (current chair of the Library Committee of SRUTI), suggested that I expand on that theme and write in greater depth on the various facets of the music of Thyagaraja that elevated him above everyone else. This I felt was rather a tall order. She then suggested that perhaps I could write about Thyagaraja over a series of articles rather than a single one. Succumbing to her friendly and persistent persuasion, I have made bold to undertake this task. We are hoping it would be a participatory effort, in the sense that others would feel free to contribute articles on the theme individually or jointly. One, of course, acknowledges the significant contributions of Prabhakar Chitrapu, analyzing and bringing out the meanings of many kritis.

In this introductory piece, we will focus on the structure of Thyagaraja's compositions.

While many composers before him had experimented with the so called kriti format, it was Thyagaraja who perfected it for posterity. The kriti format in this context consists of a pallavi, an anupallavi, and one or more charanams in (each of) which the second part of the charanam has the same dhatu (music) as the anupallavi. [This form of repetition is also found in many works in western classical music.]

Imitation, it is said, is the highest form of flattery. If that is true, Thyagaraja had no dearth of flatterers. Indeed, his brilliant contemporary, Syama Sastry adopted that format. So did Swati Tirunal. Also younger contemporaries like Ponniah Pillai (of the Thanjavur quartet and disciple of Muthuswami Dikshitar), and Subbaraya Sastry who studied with Thyagaraja. Indeed, to this day this format has been the mainstay of all later composers. Some flattery indeed!!

While most of Thyagaraja's compositions follow the kriti format, he has experimented with other formats also. For example in the kriti *Sri Raghuvara* (Kambhodhi, Adi) he has used multiple charanams with different dhatus. On the other hand he has also composed many pieces in the so called keertana format which have multiple charanas with almost identical dhatus. This format goes back at least to Annamacharya. These Utsava/Bhajana sampradaya keertanas are easy to learn and often taught to beginners. At the other end of the spectrum are the glorious Pancharatna kritis which also contain multiple charanams with varying dhatus. But they are so complex musically that they can be rendered only by well trained musicians. Interestingly enough the Utsava/Bhajana sampradaya keertanas as well as the more difficult Pancharatna kritis sound best when rendered as ghoshti ganam (group singing).

No discussion of the structure of Thyagaraja's kritis can be complete without mentioning the great innovation of sangatis. Sangatis are repetitions of lines of a kriti with increasing complexity of music within the same tala scheme. The brilliant sangatis in *Dharini telusukonti* (Suddha saveri, Adi), *Oh Rangasayi* (Kambhodhi, Adi), *Rama nee samananam evaru* (Karaharpriya, Rupakam) and many others are masterpieces of composition. These sangatis are the models for the modern day *neravals*. Once again, many later day composers have used this technique to embellish their kritis. In fact some musicians have even taken liberties with the kritis of other composers also and included sangatis which presumably were not part of the original compositions. Perhaps the most famous example of this is that of Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan who is believed to have introduced the many sangatis we hear in the famous Hamsadwani kriti *Vatapi ganapathim* of Muthuswami Dikshitar.

While discussing kritis, often one focuses on the raga bhava aspects and not so much on tala. But Thyagaraja was an innovator in this area also. Assuming four notes to a beat for Adi talam (2-kali chowkam), he has composed kritis at various eduppus apart from the samam (at the beat). Some examples: one note after the samam (*Kaddanu variki*, Todi), two notes after samam (*Enduku peddala*, Sankarabharnam), three notes after

samam (*Chakkani raja margamu*, Karaharpriya), a full beat after samam (*Endaro mahanubhavulu*, Sri) and even a full beat and a half after samam (*Enta nerchina*, Suddha dhanyasi). He has employed similar atheetha eduppus in other talams also. An example of anagata eduppu (before the beat) is *Mataladamodi galada* (Charukesi, Adi).

In subsequent articles, we would explore these and other characteristics of the music of Thyagaraja which make him the great, indeed the unique composer that he was.



Inspiration for a Song

T. Sarada

Here is one of the many interesting events in the life of Sri Thyagaraja. Sri Gopala Krishna Bharati, (1811-1881), (Ref. 1), who lived during the time of the Trinities was famous for his simple songs and music dramas written in Tamil. His "Nandanar Charitram" published in 1861 became a popular piece for stage presentations and he was known by name to Sri Thyagaraja. Gopala Krishna Bharati once came to visit the much older Sri Thyagaraja (1767-1847), [2], and get his blessings. When he introducing himself as a visitor from Mayuram, Sri Thyagaraja asked him if he knew the famed Gopala Krishna Bharati. Thrilled by the recognition, Bharati said that it was his own humble self. During this visit Bharati had the occasion to hear Sri Thyagaraja's Abhogi elaborated by his disciples followed by the song, "Manasu Nilpaka Sakti". The beauty of the composition took Bharati's breath away. Just then Sri Thyagaraja asked Bharati if he had composed any song in Abhogi. Bharati did not answer the question since he had not done that so far. That same night Bharati composed the song, "Sabhapatikku" and sang it for Sri Thyagaraja, the next day. There is an account which says that the Anupallavi of this song which starts with the words, "Kripanidhi ivaraippola", was a reference not only to Lord Siva of Chidambaram but a homage paid to Sri Thyagaraja for his graciousness. The actual words mean, "a benevolent soul like this person".

When Sri Thyagaraja learnt that the song was composed only the previous night, his respect for the young composer increased greatly and he expressed his appreciation profusely. Bharati was touched by the sincere appreciation of the great composer. This event is considered to have been the turning point in Bharati's life, since he became a prolific and very popular composer from that time on.

Acknowledgement: These interesting, obvious, and implied meanings were brought to my attention by Mani Subramanyan, who said that it was often mentioned by Sri U. V. Swaminatha Iyer the great literary figure in Tamil Literature who lived in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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Thyagaraja's Compositions in Bharatanatyam Kala Menon

Balasaraswati is once believed to have said, "Bharatanatyam, in its highest moment, is the embodiment of music in its visual form". Some of the well-known music composers for Bharatanatyam include Jayadeva, Narayana Thirtha, Kshetrajna, the Tanjore Quartette - Ponnayya, Chinayya, Sivanandam and Vadivelu, Veena Dhanammal, Swati Tirunal, Rukmini Arundale, Arunachala Kavi Rayar, and Gopalakrishna Bharati to name but a few.

Thyagaraja (1767-1847), the great saint, poet, and composer lived in Tanjavur District. Most of his compositions known as kirtanas and kritis were inspired by devotion to Lord Rama, and have very appealing short Telugu lyrics that combine intense Bhakti with the art of music. Krishna Raja Wodeyar, the royal scholar patron of the arts in Mysore, was a contemporary of Thyagaraja and also of the Tanjore Quartet (who gave a marga format to the Bharatanatyam solo recital). Under the Wodeyar dynasty, there was a great resurgence and patronage of the arts. Tanjavur was also considered by many as the most important music and dance center of India for many years. So, although it appears that there was opportunity for Thyagaraja's compositions to be adapted to Bharatanatyam during his lifetime, there is historical evidence to show that Thyagaraja actually criti-

cized the teaching of Bhakti music to devadasis, and some historians believe that one reason he refused to sing for the king in Tanjavur was because he wished to dissociate his music from that of the devadasis. During this period, Bharatanatyam was mainly performed in the temples by the Devadasis and in the royal courts by Rajadasis.

It was not until the 20th century and largely due to the arrival of Rukmini Devi Arundale and like-minded visionaries into the cultural scene in India, that Bharatanatyam underwent a much needed resurrection. Bharatanatyam was extricated from the temples and royal courts and developed into a refined art form for all. As a result of this movement, Thyagaraja's many compositions have found their way into Bharatanatyam. For the most part, Thyagaraja's Bhakti compositions were intended to be sung in the moods of love in separation. To sing in this mode is to emphasize the devotee's feminine aspects (prakriti) in relation to the masculine Lord (purusha). Thyagaraja's expression of the feminine in his compositions in the purusha-prakriti context was usually rather veiled. He exercised refinement in his portrayal of Sringara rasa. This aspect of Thyagaraja's compositions lends itself well to how Rukmini Devi envisioned the expression of Sringara bhava through Bharatanatyam. Today, a number of Thyagaraja's kritis have been adapted to Bharatanatyam choreography and a few examples will be discussed below:

Thyagaraja composed two musical plays – Prahalada Bhakti Vijayamu which tells the story of Prahalada's devotion (Sthira bhakti) in a very impressionable way and consists of 45 songs, dialogues and poetry, and the other is Nauka Charitram which consists of 21 songs and tells the story of a boat trip that the gopis take with Krishna. The predominant bhava here is Madhura bhakti. Both these musical plays have been adapted to Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi performances.

The Dhanajayans have produced a dance drama on the life of Thyagaraja himself called Sri Thyagaraja Vaibhavam. A number of Thyagaraja's compositions were used in this group performance. The performance opened with Sreeganapathini in Sourashtram. Other compositions that were used were Tulasidalamula che in Mayamalavagowla, Nagumomu in Abheri, Venuganalolunikana in Kedaaragowla, Evarikkai in Devamanohari, Nidhichalasukhama in Kalyani, Melukovayya in Bauli, Nenenduve-dakudura in Karnataka Behag raga, Evarimatta vinnavo in Kamboji, Kanukontini sreeramudu nedu in Bilahari, Nannuvidachi in Ritigowla, and Sita kalyana vaibhogame in Kurinji. The production ended, as very many Bharatanatyam performances do, with the mangalam, Pavamanasut-hudupattu in Saurashtra.

The acclaimed dancer, Urmila Sathyanarayana recently performed Thyagaraja's Endaro Mahanubhavulu in a Bharatanatyam recital in India. Also, Ananda Shankar Jayant, an exponent of Bharatanatyam from the Kalakshetra school and a Kuchipudi exponent from Hyderabad staged a monoballet, Thyagaraja Ramayanam at the music academy performance in Chennai recently. Ananda is the Honorary Director of Shankaranada Kalakshetra, a premier institution for music and dance in Secunderabad. The presentation was choreographed by Ananda herself using compositions of Thyagaraja to portray the story of Rama. The songs used included: Sogasuchooda tharama, Ooyala loogavaiya, Muni kanu saiga thelisi, Sita kalyana vaibhogame, Sandhamu theerpavaiya, Oka mata, Oka bhanamu, Entha nine varninthumu sabari, Marukelara O rahgava, Apa rama Bhakti, and Sarasa sama dhaana. These are just a few examples that demonstrate the welcome infiltration by Thyagaraja's compositions into the classical dance forms of India and is in no way intended as an exhaustive information source on the subject. All we can say with certainty is that this list is ever growing.

In 1925, Bangalore Nagaratnammal, an accomplished musician and dancer who was from the devadasi and rajadasi community attached to the Mysore palace due to adverse family circumstances, was given the charge of constructing a memorial to the saint at his Samadhi in Thiruvaiyaru after experiencing a spiritually uplifting vision of Thyagaraja. As a result of her one pointed efforts and Bhakti towards Thyagaraja, a shrine with a marble image of Thyagaraja was constructed in Thiruvaiyaru as per His directions. The annual Thyagaraja aradhanai is celebrated in this shrine on Pushya Bahula Panchami day in January. Nagaratnammal died on May 19, 1952 and was buried by her friends at the feet of her Guru, Thyagaraja. Legend has it that a Garuda was seen circling above at the time of her burial and the assembled Bhaktas took this as a sign of the "will of the guru". When a few drops of rain fell it seemed to those assembled as if rose-water was being sprinkled in Nagaratnammal's honor.

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Dr. Kala Menon is a connoisseur of the arts and is a research scientist in oncology at the University of Pennsylvania.

Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam

T. Sarada

There are two well known music dramas of Sri Thyagaraja and they are Prahlada Baktha vijayam and Nauka Charitram*. This article will examine Prahlada Bhakta Vijayam in some detail. In this work, Thyagaraja has employed Kirtanas, Slokas, Vachanas and other musical forms. His use of the different styles of Padyas show the great depth of his theoretical knowledge and his prowess in Telugu literature. (Sisapadyam, gandhapadyam, dvipadai, udpalamala, tedageeti, chambakamala utsaka vruttam etc., are some examples.) At the same time he also employed the local Tamil tradition of writing a musical work. (1&2) It is a fusion of two styles blended seamlessly.

The period before and during Sri Thyagaraja's time saw many composers/musicologists or Mukya Vaggeyakaraas writing musical dramas. The Yakshagana of Andhra and Karnataka, Yatra of Bengal and Bhavana of Assam were referred to as, Bhagavata Melam in Tamil tradition with minor differences. Just to give one example, Sri Purandhara Dasa wrote some Yakshaganas, like Draupati Vastrabharanam, Sudhama Charitam and Anasuya Charitram out of which the last is still in use and the other two are lost. (1&3)

In temples and some villages of Tanjavur in Tamil Nadu, especially in Merattur, the practice of enacting musical plays in Abhinaya, by a troupe of Bhagavathas was popular. The performers were very proficient in both music and dance. Merattur Venkatarama Bhagavathar enriched the Bhagavatha Mela Nataka Sampradaya with his Prahlada Charitra, in Telugu which was very popular. Sri Thyagaraja was fascinated by such devotional and dramatic outpourings. To him such performances were sanctified by Purandhara Dasa's works, Sri Jayadeva's Gita Govindam and Narayana Thirtha's Krishna Lila Tarangini. He also wanted to add to this repertoire. Both Prahlada Baktha Vijayam and Nauka Charitram of Thyagayya were modeled on the same sche-

matic as the Natakas of the Bhagavatha tradition. These have descriptive songs, dialogue songs, introductory verses, and prose passages. For some reason these were not performed during his time, as a whole, although he meant them to be. Many selections from these were and still are popular in concerts. Some examples are given below.

Sri Thyagaraja did not use traditional stories in either of his music dramas, but only what was in his imagination or inspiration. Hence it is not surprising to note that the songs in his Prahlada have no reference what so ever to Narasimha Avatar. There is neither graphic nor even subtle references to the destruction of Hiranyakasipu, in these songs. (2). It may also have been in deference to Merattur Bhagavathar that he did not want to redo the Puranic story taking away the glory of the earlier work. Thus his creation is like acknowledging the earlier work and building on one aspect of it, an aspect which was near and dear to his own heart. Only the superior Bhakti of Prahlada and how he triumphed is stressed as though Thyagaraja's focus is on the victory of Bhakti and nothing else. There may have been another reason for his taking this approach. (See below.)

Again, Sri Thyagaraja gave importance only to feelings or Bhava, instead of the technical aspects of the raga when he composed these songs. Thus these songs are mostly meant to be sung like Kirtanas. He employed long Padyas (Vruttam in Tamil) for elaborating different themes, and capped them with beautiful songs. The work has five chapters, employs 28 ragas and there are 45 songs and 145 Padyas. Slokas from Mukundha mala, Ramayanam and Bhagavatam are used by him in the work. Musicologists often quote the second chapter of the work where Sri Thyagaraja through the voice of Sage Narada describes the grandeur of Vishnu in Vaikuntam as a super example of his descriptive writing. Known as Gadyam or Surnika in Sanskrit, his prose style is considered to be remarkable as literary passages. Also quoted by the pundits are the Dantakam passages that are rich in play of words, rhyme and alankaras.

Confining only to the songs of his work, one can say that following the practice of other musical drama composers Tyagaraja used many Rakti ragas, like Huseni, Sahana, Pun-nagavarali, Ghanta, Nilambari, Gaulipantu, Asaveri, Ahiri and Paras (Paraju). These ragas are melodic and colorful; they have a soothing and soft effect in contrast to the majestic Ghana ragas and are often rendered in a slow tempo, to delineate the beauty of the ragas.(4)

The songs, Ni Nama Rupamulaku, and Sri Ganapathi, in Sourashtram, Vasudevayani, in Kalyani, Varidhi neekku, in Todi, Nannu Vidichi in Rithigaula, Rara mayinti dakka in Asaveri, E natti Nomu Palamo, in Bhairavi and Vandanam, in Sahana are just some examples that have become vital parts of the concert music performances. Some Apoorva Raga kritis like, O Rama in Nagagandhari and Varamaina Netrotsavvamunu in Paraj are there in Prahlada.

The storyline used by Thyagaraja is based on the parallels in his own life. Being a Rama Bhakta from his early years, and being subject to many trials and tribulations while pursuing this path, Prahlada's childhood and what he went through seems to have struck a sympathetic chord in his mind. He also seems to have been completely carried away by the emotions and instead of talking about Prahlada and his unshaken devotion to Hari or Vishnu, even under great hardships and punishments from his father, he would say about his own Bhakti and start describing Sri Rama and the Rama Avatar. The way he went back and forth with Prahlada's life and his own adds an element of authenticity to the poignancy of what a Bhakta goes through. One has only to hear or read the words of Vandhanamu Raghunandhana in Sahana, or Eti Janmamidi, in Varali, Nannu Brovakanu, in Sankarabharanam, O Rama Rama, in Naghagandhari, Sri Rama Jaya Rama, in Madyamavathi, Ramabhirama in Saveri and the list is long, to realize what he was aiming at. There are some songs, of course, that refer only to Prahlada's prayers, plight and rewards. The songs, Adugu varamula, in Arabhi, Entanusu varintu in Saurashtram, Ennaga in Nilambari, Ippudaina in Arabhi and Nijamaite in Bhairavi are true to the title

of his work. But on the whole there are more songs on Rama and addressing Rama as coming from the Bhakta, Thyagaraja than on Hari or Vishnu which would represent Prahlada's prayers or Bhakti.

It is once again very clear that while writing these dramas his focus was to extol the importance of Bhakti, the seemingly difficult life of a Bhakta and the great rewards at the end.

* A very short article on the musical plays of Thyagaraja appeared in the 2001 Thyagaraja Aradhana issue of Sruti. this article is a slightly expanded version of one of them with some of the same references.

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Rare keertanas of Tyagaraja discovered

Contributed by: **Prabhakar Chitrapu**

From Deccan Chronicle, Wednesday, Feb 11, 2004, Citizens Section, by Kapil Raghuram

A rare gesture by the Madurai Saurashtra Library and the dogged perseverance of music lovers Veturi Anandamurthy and Akella Mallikarjuna Sharma saw 15 keertanas of saint, composer Tyagaraja see the light of the day.

The keertanas which are not in vogue, were preserved in Madurai Saurashtra Library which is not open to the public. The duo who were commissioned by the Ramadasu project, Khammam for research work approached the Library authorities and after persistent requests, they got access to the huge treasure of rare manuscripts on various subject.

Veturi Anandamurthy is an epigraphist and former head of the Telugu Department, Osmania University while Akella Mallikarjuna Sharma, former principal of Secunderabad College. Taking the expertise of the two into account, the library authorities asked them to go through certain works of Tyagaraja, composed by his disciple Vallajipeta Venkata-ramana Bhagavathulu and others. While scanning through the voluminous works, they came across hundreds of compositions of Tyagaraja and among them were some rare keertanas which are not in circulation. Enthused by their find, Veturi and Sharma took photocopies of the works, most of which were badly damaged. After toiling for months, the duo discovered 15 new keertanas of the Carnatic music Saint which are not in vogue.

Veturi says about their discovery, "Several compositions of Tyagaraja which are preserved in the library and not in circulation, are waiting to be discovered. Organizations involved in popularizing Telugu culture and music must come forward to take the cause" he adds. In order to popularize the keertanas, Veturi and Sharma have requested the services of the well known musician Nedunuri Krishnamurthy. "The first album comprising seven keertanas will be released in February", Sharma revealed.

Selected Compositions of Sri Tyagaraja Compiled by Prabhakar Chitrapu

We give below five selected compositions of Sri Tyagaraja with English interpretations. The overall meanings are extracted from "Compositions of Tyagaraja," compiled and edited by T. K. Govindarao, published by Ganamandir Publications, India, 1995. The line-by-line interpretations are by the author.

Song: Emi jEsitE

raagam: tODi taaLam: caapu

8 hanumatODi mEla

Aa: S R1 G2 M1 P D1 N2 S

Av: S N2 D1 P M1 G2 R1 S

pallavi

Emi jEsitE nEmi

What use is whatever they do?

shrI rAma svAmi karuNa lEni vArilalO

Those that lack the karuna of Sri Rama? In this world ...

anupallavi

kAma mOha dAsulai

Those that are enslaved to desires and attractions,

shrI rAmuni kaTTu teliyani vArilalO

Those that do not know the ways of Sri Rama, In this world

caraNam 1

savamu jEsitE nEmi

What if they perform yagnas?

kalimini putrOtsavamu galigitE nEmi

What if they acquire wealth and celebrate progeny?

bhuvilOnanya bIja janituni goni Emi

What if they adopt other's offsprings?

shivakara shrI rAmuni dayalEni vArilalO

Oh Pure One! Those that lack the daya of Sri Rama, In this world...

caraNam 2

meDagaTTitE nEmi

What if they build mansions?

anduna lAndaru jODu gaTTitE nEmi

What if they decorate them with 'things'?

cEDiyalanu meppinca delisitE nEmi

What if they know how to impress women?

IDulEni rAmuni dayalEni vArilalO

Those that lack the daya of the incomparable Sri Rama, In this world

caraNam 3

immu kaligitE nEmi

What if they have 'immu'?

illAliki sommu beTTite Emi

What if they offer wealth to their wives?

Kamma viltu kElini delisi Emi

What if they know the plays of 'kamma viltu'?

tammi kantiv ni karuNalEni vArilalO

Those that lack the karuna of 'thamma kantu' (Sri Rama), In this world...

caraNam 4

rAjyamElitE nEmi

What if they rule kingdoms?

bahujanulalO pUjyulaitE nEmi

What if they are honored by many people?

Ajya pravAhamutO nannamiDitE nEmi

What if they offer food in flowing ghee?

pUjyuDaina rAmuni dayalEni vArilalO

Those that lack the daya of the respected Sri Rama, In this world....

caraNam 5

guruvu tAnaitE nEmi

What if one is a Guru?

kaNTiki mEnu guruvai tOcitE nEmi

What if one is seen as a great teacher?

Vara mantramanyula-kupadEshincatE nEmi

What if one initiates others to mantras?

vara tyAgarAja nutuni dayalEni vArilalO

Those that lack the daya of the One worshipped by Thyagaraja (Sri Rama), In this world....

Overall Meaning

Of what avail is anything done by people who are not blessed with the grace of Sri Rama? People who being slaves to lust and other passions are incapable of knowing and understanding the SAS-

TRAIC commandments of Sri Ramaswami! What if they performed YAGAS, what if they beget sons to inherit their property, what if they adopt others' sons for that purpose, if they do not have the auspicious grace of Sri Rama? What if they built palatial houses and fit them up with rows of lights and illuminations, what if they know the art of pleasing women, if they fail to get the grace of the incomparable Sri Rama! What if they have house, properties, loaded their wives with jewels and what if they were adept in sexual sciences, if they had not the grace of the Lotus-eyed One! What if they rule over kingdoms and command respect and regard of people, what if they feed people with rich and sumptuous meals with full of ghee, if they do not have the grace of worshipful Sri Rama! What if they attain the status of a guru! What if, for the look, they appear grand and big, what if they initiate others into MANTRA, if they are not blessed with the grace of Sri Rama!

Song: O raajeevaaksha

raagam: aarabi taaLam: caapu

29 deera shankaraabharaNam janya

Aa: S R2 M1 P D2 S

Av: S N3 D2 P M1 G3 R2 S

pallavi

O rAjIvAkSa OrAjUpula jUcEda vErA nE nIku vErA

Oh the One with eyes like lotus petals!

Why do You look at me with an unwilling eye?

Am I 'other' for You?

anupallavi

nErani nApai nEramu lEncitE gArAdani paluku vArulEni

nannu

If I am attributed unfair accusations, I do not have anyone to say

'No'. To such a me,

caraNam 1

makkuvatO ninnu mrokkina janulaku

To those people who worship You with love,

dikku nIvani ati grakkuna brOtuvani

That You are the Savior and that You will quickly take care of them,

ekkuva sujanula okka mATalu vini
 Having heard many such words from good people
cakkani shrI rAma dakkati gadarA
 Have I not been caught by you, O Nice Sri Rama!

caraNam 2
miti mErulEni prakrtiOna dagili
 Caught in the boundless nature/world,
nE mati hInuDai sannuti sEyanEraKa
 Losing my mind, not singing Your praises
batimAli nlvE gatiyani nera nammiti gAni
 Pleading, haven't I lovingly believed that you are the final solution?
ninu maracitinA? santatamu
 Have I forgotten You? Always

caraNam 3
mAvara suguNa umAvara sannuta
 My Lord! One with good qualities! One worshipped by Uma's Con-
 sort!
dEvara daya cEsi brOvaga rAdA
 Oh God! Can't You kindly come to take care of me?
pAvana bhakta janAvana
 Pure One! Protector of Bhaktas!
mahAnubhAva tyAgarAJa bhAvita inkanu
 Great One! One thought about by Thyagaraja! Still....

Overall meaning

Lord with eyes as big and large as the beautiful lotus! Why do you look in askance at me as if I am a stranger to you? I really belong to you. I am innocent but accused unjustly. There is no one to plead on my behalf. You are reputed to be the Refuge and Savior of your genuine devotees. So I surrendered at the feet of yours. O Abode of Virtues! Caught in the illusory and deceptive charm of this sprawling world, sometime I have lost my balance and erred in not physically worshipping you as I should, but believe me. Lord, I placed my total faith in you, never forgetting you; Lord of Sita Devi! Abode of Virtues! Worshipped by Siva! O Supreme! Protect me out of compassion. O Immaculate One!

Song: neekE dayaraaka
 raagam: neelaambari taal: tripuTa

29 dheera shankaraabharaNam janya
 Aa: S R2 G3 M1 P D2 P N3 S
 Av: S N3 P M1 G3 R2 G3 S

pallavi
nIkE dayarAka nE jEyu panulella nera vErurA rAma
 If You do not take pity (daya), will all the deeds I do be fulfilled?
 Oh Rama!

anupallavi
E kOpincaka nEnu nIvanu jnAni kElAgu sukhamiccunE O
rAghava
 Unless You are not angry, will the wiseman, who claims that I am
 You, get sukham? Oh Raghava!

caraNam 1
manasu nilvani vAru mAya jAlamu jEsi mari mukti ko-
nanaumE
kanu samjnuku rAni kAntanu balimi garamida vAsamaunE O
rAghava
 Those who cannot make their minds still, by doing magical tricks,
 can they achieve liberation?
 If she does not come by the wink of an eye, will she be yours by
 force? Oh Raghava!

caraNam 2
vADuka lEni vidyala cEta sabhalOna vAdinca bOnaunE
sATi vinnamATa madini nilpa lEni sarasuni viTamaunE O
rAghava
 With skills that are not in vogue, can one debate in a congress?
 If one cannot keep in mind what one has heard alongside,

caraNam 3
meppulakai bahu dharmamu jEsina migula brOva tagunE
tappu mATalu gAdu tAraka nAma shrI tyAgarAJuni paini O
rAghava
 For praise, if one does good deeds, will one be eligible for being
 saved?
 These are not mistaken words. Oh Taraka Nama! O Raghava!
 On Thyagaraja, (If You do not take pity, will all the deeds I do be
 fulfilled?)

Overall Meaning

O Rama! If even you do not deign to grace me out of compassion, no amount of effort on my part can meet with success. No man, however wise, who is not able to merge himself in you without a trace of separate identity, the sense of 'I' and 'Thou', can obtain supreme tranquility. Raghava! If one is not able to control his mind, can he ever hope to attain salvation by magic? Can a charming damsel who does not understand amorous glances, be seduced by voluptuous advances? Can one hold his own conviction in a disputation in an assembly on a subject he has little acquaintance with? Will he not meet with a situation like one who cannot hold back a secret when listened to? Will God protect, if charity is done with pomp? O Possessor of Tarakanama! These are not false statements.



Song: saamiki sari

raagam: bEgaDa taaLam: roopakam

29 dheera shankaraabharaNam janya
Aa: S G3 R2 G3 M1 P D2 N2 D2 P S
Av: S N3 D2 P M1 G3 R2 S

pallavi

sAmiki sari jeppa jAla vElpula rAma

To Lord Sri Rama, I cannot mention an equal among the Gods!

anupallavi

nA manasu natanipai nATi uNDaga norula

When my heart is fixated on Him,

Others (I cannot mention as being equal to Lord Rama).

caraNam 1

**eTi yOcana cAlu nevvvari kETulO vrAlu mATalADutamElu
madi kidE padivElu**

What kind of thought is this! Enough!!

Each has one's own preference.

(For me) It would be great if He may just talk to me.

To my heart, that is enormous!

caraNam 2

**tana kaNTi kentO muddu tappa DADina paddu canuvu jEyu
nE proddu callani jUpu kaddu**

To my eye, he is so adorable!

His style of not going back on His word.

His being close to me is my day.

His kind looks are my treasure.

caraNam 3

**anni vElpula lOna natani sarigAna tannu brOcina ghana tyA-
garAja sakhuDaina**

Among all Gods, I do not find an equal to Him.

To Lord Rama, who saved me, who is the great friend of Thyaga-
raja,

I cannot mention an equal among the Gods!

Overall Meaning

There is no other God amongst Gods who can equal my Lord Rama. My mind had merged in Him. What is the need for any other thought? Indeed this is sufficient. Whatever has been ordained will take place. Just a word from Him is all I solicit. It is the greatest fortune my mind craves for. My eyes relish immensely His lustrous form. He keeps His word scrupulously. Forever He loves and bestows, His graceful glance. He is peerless among Devas. He alone is my savior.



Song: mEru samaana

raagam: maayamaaLava gowLa taaLam: dEshaadi

15 maayamaaLava gowLa mela

Aa: S R1 G3 M1 P D1 N3 S

Av: S N3 D1 P M1 G3 R1 S

pallavi

mEru samAna dhIra varada raghuvIra jUtAmu rArA mahA

Oh the One comparable to the great Meru mountain!

The valiant One! The Giver of boons! Raghuvira!

Would like to see You, please come.

anupallavi

sArasAra oyyArapu naDalanu nIrada kAntini nIthivini maha

The beautiful lovely gait, the blue light emanating from His body,

Your majesty,

Oh the One comparable to the great Meru mountain!

caraNam

alakala muddunu tilakapu tIrunu taLuku jekkulacE danaru

memmOmunu

gaLamuna shObhillu kanaka bhUSaNamula daLita dur-

mAnava tyAgarAJArcita

The loveliness of the vexations,

The manner of the 'tilakam',

The sparkling cheeks,

The radiant countenance,

The shining golden ornaments around the neck,

The One worshipped by the lowly Thyagaraja.

Overall Meaning

Raghuvara! Firm and inviolable like the Mount Maha Meru! Bestower of boons! Pray come! Let us feast our eyes on your emerald hue, your majestic stately gait. Your lovely tresses, sporting ever the beautiful kasturi tilaka on your forehead, your blooming cheeks, effulgent countenance and dangling gold necklaces adorning your bosom. Destroyer of the wicked! Give us the privilege, the blessing, the rare good fortune of watching this grand spectacle.

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