



Compositions of Subbaraya Sastri An Analysis

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Life and Biography

Subbaraya Sastri (Subbarāya Śāstri), a composer of repute of the 19th Century, belongs to an illustrious musical lineage. He is the worthy son of the great composer, Syama Sastri. However, the available literature on the life and contribution of these composers is very limited, and all the more in the case of Subbaraya Sastri. Some substantial information about these composers can be gathered from the book titled, “Great Composers” written by Prof. P. Sambamoorthy, a renowned musicologist of the 20th Century. As per records, the ancestors of Syama Sastri hailed from the Kambam region and were known as Kambattar. Later, they moved to Kanchipuram, the city of temples, and the abode of Goddess Baṅgāru (Golden) Kamakshi. It is said that Adi Sankaracharya, during his tour to holy places, visited Kanchipuram and renovated the Bangaru Kamakshi temple there, which was in a dilapidated condition. He then appointed the ancestors of Syama Sastri as hereditary temple arcakā-s (priests).

Due to political unrest, these arcakā-s left Kanchipuram. To safeguard the golden idol, they carried the Bangaru Kamakshi with them, reached Tiruvarur, the birthplace of Tyagaraja, and installed it in the Tiruvarur temple. Syama Sastri was also born in Tiruvarur.

Again, due to unfavourable political circumstances, Syama Sastri’s father Visvanatha Iyer left Tiruvarur and finally relocated to Thanjavur, a place that was ruled then by King Tulajaji, who was not only Visvanatha Iyer’s benefactor but also helped him in building a temple for Bangaru Kamakshi. It was in Thanjavur that Subbaraya Sastri was born in 1803.

Subbaraya Sastri was the second son of Syama Sastri, the elder being Panju Sastri who had two wives. Through his first, he had three sons namely, Ramakrishna Sastri, Sambasiva Sastri

and Annasvami Sastri. Since Subbaraya Sastri had no male issues, he adopted Annasvami Sastri — the youngest son of Panju Sastri. While Panju Sastri took over the hereditary responsibilities of the temple, Subbaraya Sastri took to music and other academic pursuits. He gained mastery over Telugu, Sanskrit, and Tamil, coupled it with vigorous training in music from his own father Syama Sastri, and later trained under the great composer Tyagaraja. He was proficient in playing the violin and an instrument called the sariṇḍā. It is believed that he drew large crowds whenever he played the latter instrument.

Thus, it can be observed that Subbaraya Sastri hailed from a very rich spiritual cum musical lineage that was imbued with the classicism of the highest order, having guru-s such as his own father Syama Sastri, and none other than the master composer Tyagaraja.

If the merit of a composer is to be weighed only with reference to the number or the popularity of his compositions, Subbaraya Sastri can lay no claim to either. Unlike his great guru-s, neither does he have numerous compositions to his credit, nor a long śiṣya paramparā to popularize his creations. In spite of these limitations, that he has been ranked amongst the *uttama* (superior) *vāggēyakāra*-s of yesteryears, speaks volumes for the value and merit of each of his compositions in very clear terms. In the following paragraphs, we will see how he has enriched the Carnatic music repertoire with his priceless gems of compositions.

Subbaraya Sastri's contribution

As mentioned earlier, Subbaraya Sastri does not have many compositions to his credit. About 12 compositions have been listed in the published versions of music text books. All his compositions are in Telugu¹. The language is simple and lucid. He has signed his compositions with the mudrā (signature), 'Kumāra'. It is said that he perhaps chose this mudrā owing to his birth star, Krittika, which is associated with Lord Subramanya or Kumara Perumal.

As far as we know, Subbaraya Sastri does not seem to have attempted various musical forms like *Varṇam*-s, *Svarajati*-s, and *Tilla-nā*-s. He has only composed *kṛti*-s that too in the usual format having the sections *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi*, and *Caranam*².

1 Except for one in *rāga* *Vasantā*, which is in Tamil, and whose authorship is under debate. This is discussed later on.

2 If any exception is to be pointed out, it is that he has composed a piece in the *kīrtana* format, that is, a musical form with the section *Pallavi* followed by a number of *caraṇa*-s, all having the same *Dātu* (tune). Example: *Dalacinavāru* — *Dhanyāsi* — *Ādi*. The musical format resembles the *Divyanāma* and *Utsava Sampradāya* *kṛti*-s of Tyagaraja.

List of Subbaraya Sastri's compositions

Sr. No	Title	Rāga	Tāla
1.	Dalacinavāru	Dhanyāsi	Ādi
2.	Ēmaninnē	Mukhāri	Ādi
3.	Janani ninnuvinā	Rītigauļa	Miśra Cāpu
4.	Mīnanayana	Darbār	Rūpakam
5.	Nannu brōcuṭāku	Tōḍi	Ādi
6.	Ninnu sēvincina	Yadukula Kāmbhōji	Miśra Cāpu
7.	Ninnuvināgatigāna	Kalyāṇi	Ādi
8.	Śaṅkari nīvē	Bēgada	Rūpakam
9.	Śrī Kamalāmbikē	Tōḍi	Rūpakam
10.	Śrī Kāmākṣi	Vasantā	Ādi
11.	Vanajāsana	Śrī	Rūpakam
12.	Veṅkaṭāśaila vihāra	Hamīr Kalyāṇi	Ādi

However, the veteran musicologist, Prof. P. Sambamoorthy states that a few more of Subbaraya Sastri's compositions are available in manuscripts that were in the possession of the descendants of the family.

Content / Theme

Subbaraya Sastri's compositions are mainly in praise of Dēvī (Goddess) or Amba, and portray the sentiment of compassion (karuṇārasa) – pleading with the Goddess to shower Her compassion on him. In this respect, Subbaraya Sastri has truly followed his father and guru Syama Sastri, whose compositions reflect this sentiment in ample measure. As is well known, Syama Sastri was an ardent devotee of Goddess Kamakshi and, we find this sentiment of bhakti and compassion as the undertone in all his compositions. As an illustration, one of Syama Sastri's kṛti-s that expresses the sentiment of karuṇārasa is given below:

Ninnē namminānu – Tōḍi – Miśra Cāpu

In this kṛti (in the pallavi) “Ninnē namminānu sadā nāvinnapamuvini nannubrōvumu” he expresses, “Dēvi! I always believe in you. Please heed my prayers and protect me.” Similarly, we find the use of the phrase “Kannatalligādā biddayani kanikaraminthainalēdā, Ambā” that occurs in the anupallavi of the kṛti, meaning to say, “Ambā! Are you, not my mother? Don't you have mercy on your child?,” which brings out the composer's plea to the Goddess to shower him with Her compassion.

Subbaraya Sastri follows in the same vein, in most of his compositions. To illustrate, presented below are two such compositions:

a. Nannu brōcuṭaku — Tōdi — Ādi

Nannu brōcuṭaku tāmasamēla Ambā Kāmākṣammā

“O! Mother Kamakshi! Why is this tarrying to protect me? Why this delay?”

b. Janani ninnuvinā — Rītigaula — Miśra Cāpu

The following phrase, “Janani ninnuvinā dikkevarammā jagamulōnagāna” in the pallavi, means, “O Goddess! Mother of the three worlds, who else other than you is there to take care of me on this earth.” and, “manasijamānasa sammōdiniwinavē nāmanavinivini nannubrōvumu” in the anupallavi, means, “You who fascinated the heart of Cupid, please pay heed to my entreaties and protect me”, express the same sentiment of compassion.

Thus, this kind of emotional appeal forms the key tone of expressions of the father and the son in their kṛti-s.

The musical style

The musical approach of Subbaraya Sastri reflects that of his father very closely and we may even go to the extent of saying that it is a replica of his father’s. His kṛti-s are replete with rāga bhāva and the music is highly nuanced. The musical variations occurring in his kṛti-s, especially in viṭambā kālam (slow tempo), are oriented more toward the musical phenomenon, gamakam. In other words, this type of variation which is gamakam-based, involving tonal variations, modulations, and subtle nuances in-between tones — such as shakes (kampitam), glides (jāru), etc. — requires to be observed keenly and with a discerning ear. Such a nuance-based musical approach forms an important distinguishing feature of the styles of Syama Sastri and Subbaraya Sastri from that of others. The kṛti-s Nannu brōcuṭaku and Śri Kamalāmbikē in Tōdi of Subbaraya Sastri stand as good examples modeled on such musical subtleties.

While Subbaraya Sastri closely follows the style and the content of his father’s kṛti-s, he has abstained himself with respect to one or two musical aspects. These are about the handling of rāga-s and tāla-s. While Syama Sastri, not as prolific a composer as his contemporaries Tyagaraja and Muthusvami Dikshitar, has attempted compositions in rare rāga-s like Kalgada, Cintāmanī, and Māñji, Subbaraya Sastri has none such to his credit. He has confined himself to more common rāga-s (essentially rakti rāga-s). In fact, even rāga-s like Sāvērī and Bhairavī are not found in his list. Surprisingly, even the rāga Ānanda

Bhairavī, which is acclaimed as the most favourite rāga of his father Syama Sastri, is absent from the list of his compositions.

Another aspect that Subbaraya Sastri has stood apart from that of his father, pertains to tāla. With respect to the laya aspect of music, Syama Sastri is hailed as a pioneer in introducing new ideas and concepts in the realm of tāla. For instance, he is accredited with introducing the Vilōma Cāpu Krama (Miśra Cāpu tāla rendered in the reverse order, that is, 4 + 3 in place of the usual 3 + 4 format). Talli ninnu in rāga Kalyāṇi, Ninnuvināga in rāga Pūrvikalyāṇi, Mīnalōcana brōva in rāga Dhanyāsi are a few examples of kṛti-s in the Vilōma Krama of Miśra Cāpu tāla. Syama Sastri has also introduced a few intricate laya patterns in his compositions. In contrast, Subbaraya Sastri has stuck to independent lines. He has composed kṛti-s in simple and common tāla-s namely Ādi, Rūpakam, and Miśra Cāpu, and has made use of relatively straightforward laya expositions.

Influence of the Music Trinity

Subbaraya Sastri had the good fortune to come under the influence of all the members of the illustrious Music Trinity – “Saṅgīta Mummuṛtigal” as they are called in Tamil). This influence is well reflected in his compositions. The development of various musical forms in general, and kṛti-s in particular, attained its peak during the period of the Musical Trinity, and the subsequent periods – the 18th and 19th centuries. This development brought in newer ideas by way of enriching a composition either from the musical angle or the lyrical side, or both. These are the additional sections added to a kṛti termed decorative aṅga-s like, Saṅgati-s, Svara Sāhityam, and Madhyama Kālam, to name a few. We will now observe how Subbaraya Sastri has dexterously introduced some of these aṅga-s in his kṛti-s, following the model of his great mentors namely, the Trinity – the Trendsetters of Modern Classical Carnatic Music.

Illustrated below are examples of a few decorative aṅga-s occurring in Subbaraya Sastri's kṛti-s, drawing a parallel to each one of them, from the kṛti-s of the Trinity:

1. **Saṅgati-s** : Saṅgati-s are important musical features found in Carnatic music. The credit for introducing this feature goes to the great master, Tyagaraja. Saṅgati-s may be described as variations pertaining to a musical theme. In other words, these are variations in svara phrases, constituting the arrangement or succession of svara groupings, in a graded manner. They are generally introduced in a stepwise progression, one leading to the next in a logical manner. Saṅgati-s are mainly used to highlight the rāga bhāva or the saṅcara-s of a rāga, in an interesting and appealing manner. All the same, they are used at times to focus on the sāhitya content of a particular composition. In short, the addition of musical variations

to a given musical theme, enriches the value of the musical composition, thereby enhancing listening pleasure.

Subbaraya Sastri has introduced this feature, Saṅgati, in his kṛti-s. The kṛti-s Śaṅkari nīvē in Bēgaḍa and Mīnanayana in Darbār are good examples that demonstrate his skill in handling this technical beauty. To bring out the similarities between Subbaraya Sastri and Tyagaraja in the art of introducing saṅgati-s, in a graded manner, the kṛti Mīnanayana in Darbār of Subbaraya Sastri and the kṛti Yōcana kamalalōcana of Tyagaraja in the same rāga are given hereunder:

Mīnanayana – Darbār – Rūpakam – Subbaraya Sastri

Pallavi:

1	; s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	G; G; s R s Nī vu
2	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	G; G; s R s Nī.. vu..
3	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	P; p m R g g r s Nī vu
4	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	r m P p m R g g r s Nī vu
5	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	r m p D d p m r g r s Nī vu
6	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	p m p d p d m p r g r s Nī vu
7	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	N, d p m\ G, g r s Nī vu
8	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na	ṛ ś n ś p d m p r g r s Nī vu
9	r r s n S - R S R Mī na na ya na (Nā mīda karuṇa jūḍavamma)	ṛ ś n ś p d m p r g r s Nī vu nā

Yōcana Kamalalōcana – Darbār – Ādi – Tyagaraja

Pallavi:

1	<p>; R P M P ; ; Yō ca nā</p> <p>; p m R G R ; S ; Lō ca nā</p>	<p>p m d p p m R</p> <p>; d p p m d p na nnu brō</p>	<p>G G r s R ka ma la</p> <p>p m R G G va in ka</p>
2	<p>r s R P p m p D p - r m p d Yō ca nā</p> <p>; p m R G R ; S ; Lō ca nā</p>	<p>r m p d p m R</p> <p>; d p p m d p na nnu brō</p>	<p>G G r s R ka ma la</p> <p>p m R G G va in ka</p>
3	<p>r s R P p m p D p - m p d n Yō ca nā</p> <p>; m p d p m r G R ; S ; Lō ca nā</p>	<p>r m p d p m R</p> <p>; d p m p D n d na nnu brō</p>	<p>G G r s R ka ma la</p> <p>P d p m r G G va in ka</p>
4	<p>r s R P p m p D p - m p d n Yō ca nā</p> <p>; m p d p m r G R ; S ; Lō ca nā</p>	<p>ś - d d p m R</p> <p>; d p m p D n d na nnu brō</p>	<p>G G r s R ka ma la</p> <p>P d p m r G G va in ka</p>
5	<p>r s R P p m p D p - m p d n Yō ca nā</p> <p>R - m p d p m r G R ; S ; Lō ca nā</p> <p>r s (Yōcana)</p>	<p>ś ṛ - ḡ ḡ ṛ ś - n ś</p> <p>ṛ Ś ṛ n ś - d p nan nu brō</p>	<p>d p m r g g r s . . . ka ma la</p> <p>, d m p - m r g g va in ka</p>

2. **Svara Sāhityam :** This is one of the decorative aṅga-s which has been widely handled by Subbaraya Sastri. He has composed Svara Sāhityam for almost all his compositions. In this he has followed his father who is known to have excelled in the art of Svara Sāhityam – examples are Ō! Jagadamba in Ānanda Bhairavi and Durusuga in Sāvērī. Svara Sāhityam constitutes two parts – the Cittasvaram part, and the Sāhityam corresponding to the cittasvaram. In other words, for the cittasvaram section, an

appropriate sāhityam is added in keeping with the sentiments expressed in the composition. This resultant technical appendage is termed ‘Svara Sāhityam’. Normally, the ciṭṭasvaram passage is sung after the anupallavi section, and the sāhityam for the ciṭṭasvaram is sung after the caraṇam.

An example to illustrate the use of Svara Sāhityam:

Śaṅkari nīvē – Bēgaḍā – Rūpakam

R ; ; ; S ; Śri Kāñ	; ; r n d p s s s g r ci sa da na su ra sa na
G ; ; ; M ; rā kā	; ; d p m p g R s śa śi va da na rā vē
S r n d p - s n r s g r Kō ki la ni bha mru du la ga da na	G m p d p s n r ś - m g kō ri na va ra mu lo sa gi pu du
ṛ Š ṛ n d p M p g r pa rā ku sa lu pa rā du bhā ra	S - ṛ n d p M, g r s mā pa ra ma kru pā ni dhi vi

It is interesting to note that Subbaraya Sastri has brought in another technical beauty, known as ‘Svarākṣaram’, which involves both svaram and sāhityam. In the Svara Sāhityam of the kṛti Éma ninnē — Mukhārī — Ādi, one observes Svarākṣara beauty – both Śuddha and Sucīta svarākshara-s may be noticed here. It is elucidated below (the Svarākṣara portion is highlighted):

Éma ninnē – Mukhārī – Ādi – Subbaraya Sastri

Svara Sāhityam:

R;; R g s r s n d p d Rā Kēn du va da na vi nu mi ka	S;; - s r nī sa ri	g S n d P m gā dei va mu gā na
P D; S. . . Pa dāb ja		

3. **Madhyama Kālam :** This decorative aṅga essentially pertains to the sāhitya part of a kṛti. When the sāhitya syllables or words are tightly packed in a given line or Āvartanam, it gives the impression of the line being executed in a faster tempo or Madhyama Kālam. This is termed ‘Madhyama Kāla Sāhityam’. In fact, there is very little scope for lengthy musical or vowel extensions like akāra/ukāra-s.

The term Madhyama kāla sāhityam immediately brings to mind Muthusvami Dikshitar, who is hailed as the pioneer of this model of kṛti-s. Inspired by the great composer, Subbaraya Sastri has tagged this feature to his kṛti-s, thereby adding charm and colour to them.

Here are three kṛti-s of Subbaraya Sastri that have the Madhyama Kālam feature:

- a. Śaikari nīvē – Bēgadā – Rūpakam
- b. Vanajāsana – Śrī – Rūpakam
- c. Śrī Kamalāmbikē – Tōdi – Rūpakam

Here is an illustration of Madhyama Kālam in the kṛti Vanajāsana:

The kṛti **Vanajāsana** will illustrate the use of Madhyama Kālam

g ṛ Ś-ṛ ṣ N-ś n P || p n ṣ n-p m r r G r s ||

I la lō pa la nī va la nē ga la dā. Śrī. La li tām bi kē (**Vanajāsana**)

So far, it has been observed how Subbaraya Sastri has beautifully introduced some decorative aṅga-s in his kṛti-s, following the model of the Trinity. There are certain other areas too in which the influence of the Trinity can be felt; these will be elaborated in the following sections.

Kṣētra kṛti-s of Subbaraya Sastri

As we know, Muthusvami Dikshitar was a wide traveler. During his travels, he visited temples in different places (kṣētra-s), and composed innumerable kṛti-s on the deities of those kṣētra-s. Vivid descriptions of the kṣētra, the deity, the temple, and any special feature pertaining to the kṣētra can be found in his kṛti-s.

Subbaraya Sastri may not have traveled as extensively as Muthusvami Dikshitar but he visited a few places and composed kṛti-s on the deities of the kṣētra-s.

The first kṣētra he visited was Madurai where he composed the beautiful kṛti **Mīnanayana** in rāga Darbār set to Rūpaka tāla. Like Dikshitar, he has introduced the kṣētra mudrā (a word or a phrase that alludes to the name of the place) that occurs in the caraṇam of the kṛti – *Madurānagaranivāsini*, *Madhukaitabhabhanjani*, *Amba*. Interestingly, his father Syama Sastri was also known to have visited Madurai and composed the Navaratnamālikā on Goddess Meenakshi.

The next kṣētra that Subbaraya Sastri visited was Tiruvaiyaru in Thanjavur district. He composed the kriti **Ninnuvinā gatigāna** on Goddess Dharmasamvardhini. A mention of the Goddess's name occurs in the opening line of the kṛti itself – *Ninnuvinā gatigāna jagāna vanaruhākṣi Dharmasamvardhini kāma sammardini*. There is an interesting episode about this kṛti. When Subbaraya Sastri composed this kṛti in Kalyāṇī, he wanted his guru Tyagaraja to hear it and bless him. Accepting his invitation, Tyagaraja came to the Tiruvaiyaru temple where he listened to the debut presentation of this masterly composition with a svara sāhityam appendage. The manner in which the gamakavarika, rāgarāñjaka prayōga-s and pañcamavarja prayōga-s have been handled in this kṛti, moved Tyagaraja to the extent of appreciating the creative abilities of Subbaraya Sastri. Tyagaraja conveyed the same and showered his immense blessings on his disciple.

Subbaraya Sastri's travels led him next to Kanchipuram³ (*Nagarēṣu Kāñcī* city of cities) where he composed two masterpieces, Śaṅkari nīvē, and Ēma ninnē. In the former, the kshētra mudrā can be found in the svara sāhityam – *Śri Kāñcī sadana surasana Rākāśāśivadana rāve*; so too in the latter, the mudrā occurs in the caraṇam of the kṛti – *Vara Kāñcīpurālayavāsini*.

Subbaraya Sastri's visits to Tirupati and finally to Chennai (erstwhile Madras) – where he stayed for about 12 years – have rewarded us with two magnificent compositions. At Tirupati, he composed the kriti **Veṅkaṭaśaila vihāra** dedicated to the Lord Venkateswara in rāga Hamīrkalyāṇī set to Ādi tāla. One notices the influence of Muthusvami Dikshitar here, who is known to have adopted Hindustani rāga-s to the Carnatic music system and composed a few kṛti-s in them like Parimala Ranganātham in rāga Hamīrkalyāṇī, Akhilandesvari and Ceta Śrī Bālakṛṣṇam in rāga Dvijāvanti (Jaijaivanti).

During his stay in Chennai, Subbaraya Sastri composed yet another gem of a kṛti on Lord Parthasarathi of Triplicane, **Ninnu sēvincina** in rāga Yadukulakāmbhōji set to Miśra Cāpu tāla. The Lord's name occurs in the anupallavi of the kṛti – *Kanakāngi Śrī Rukmiṇi hrdayābja dinamane Pārthasārathī Svāmi*.

Ambiguity in Authorship

Ambiguity in authorship is not something uncommon in our musical history. As is well known, all our Indian traditions – musical, cultural, and other – have been passed on from one generation to the other, essentially through oral transmission, even until the 20th Century. Written records are either absent or scanty. Thus, the lack of proper written material is basically the cause for all such ambiguities.

³ As evidence of his visit to Kāñcīpuram, it is said that his signature was found in the government district records.

As for the kṛti, Śrī Kāmākṣī — Vasantā — Ādi, Sangita Kalanidhi the late Dr. T. Viswanathan (Professor and Head of the Department of Music, Madras University, and one of the grandsons of the illustrious Vina Dhanammal), has published this kṛti with notation, in the journal of the Music Academy, 1953, mentioning it as a Tamil composition of Subbaraya Sastri. Again, Saṅgīta Kalānidhi T.K. Govinda Rao, a great musician-cum-researcher of yesteryears, in his compendium *Compositions of Śyāmā Sastri, Subbaraya Sastri, and Aṇṇāsvāmi Sastri*, has mentioned it as a composition of Subbaraya Sastri. A few other scholars and musicians too, on the basis of their analysis of the styles of various composers, strongly opine that this kṛti is a composition of Tiruvalur Ramasvami Pillai and not Subbaraya Sastri's.

Considering the high merit of the composition, both from the musical as well as the sāhitya angles, it may not be irrelevant to make one or two remarks about them here. This composition which is in simple Tamil, and clothed in soulful Vasantā phrases, is at once enchanting and appealing to listeners. As a crown, it has a lilting svara sāhityam, brimful of svarākṣara beauty. The svara madhyama (Ma), has been used in an admirable manner, with the corresponding sāhitya syllables falling under them, lifting the composition to great heights. The term 'Kumāra', which is Subbaraya Sastri's mudrā, figures in the svara sāhityam.

In passing it may be mentioned here that the late T. Sankaran, another grandson of the late Vina Dhanammal, and a musical historian, makes a reference to this kṛti in his book titled **Isai Mēdaigal**. He states that Dhanakoti Ammal⁴, Vidvān Kanchipuram Nayana Pillai's grand aunt, used to sing this kṛti with a sense of pride, boasting that this kṛti of Subbaraya Sastri is their "kuḍumba sotthu" or family treasure.

It is just unfortunate that this composition is caught in such ambiguity of authorship. We leave it at this point, hoping for further research to throw light on this.

Śiṣya paramparā

Last but not the least, is the śiṣya paramparā or the line of disciples, but for whom we would not have come to know the invaluable contributions to music, of these past masters. Credit must be given to them for serving as links, preserving the musical traditions of the past, and meticulously passing them on to posterity. Subbaraya Sastri was blessed with a well-known śiṣya paramparā that proved to be worthy torchbearers of his inimitable style of music. He had the advantage of dual śiṣya paramparā-s, which happened to include some of the well-known musicians of yesteryears – the one was through the Vina Dhanammal line and the other through his own son-in-law and his disciples. It is said that Vina

4 Dhanakoti Ammal belongs to the sishya parampara of Subbaraya Sastri.

Dhanammal's great-great-grandmother, was a direct disciple of Subbaraya Sastri himself. Thus, his music had been passed on down the line of Dhanammal, to her daughters, and to her granddaughters *viduṣī-s* Saṅgīta Kalānidhi T. Brinda and Saṅgīta Kalā Āchārya T. Muktha, illustrious doyennes of the past.

To the other *śiṣya paramparā* belonged, Mettu Kamakshi and Visalakshi – great-grandmother, and grandmother respectively of Kanchipuram Nayana Pillai⁵ – who were trained under Kacci Sastri, who was none other than the son-in-law of Subbaraya Sastri. Visalakshi's daughters were Kanchipuram Dhanakoti Ammal and Kamakshi, who together performed as the well-known Dhanakoti Sisters. Kamakshi's son was Nayana Pillai. Added to this, another musician of great name and fame who hailed from Kanchipuram had come under the influence of Nayana Pillai – it was *viduṣī* D.K. Pattammal who went on to become a Saṅgīta Kalānidhi. Thus, it can be observed how Subbaraya Sastri's compositions have come down to us through two illustrious musical lineages.

All these renowned musicians have painstakingly preserved the complex musical traditions of the Sastri family – Syama Sastri and Subbaraya Sastri. It is to them we owe whatever we have today of the music of Subbaraya Sastri.

Conclusion

Summing up, we wish to point out that in spite of Subbaraya Sastri limiting his compositions to a handful of *kṛti-s* in easy-to-follow *sāhitya*, in common *rakti rāga-s* and simple *tāla-s*, each of his compositions is a standout masterpiece in its own right, embellished with various nuances which clearly indicate the passing down of the legacy of the Music Trinity.



⁵ An eminent musician and a great pallavi exponent under whom T Brinda and T Muktha had trained for several years in their formative years.