

## **A Study of Ooththukkad Venkata Subbaiyer's Kamakshi Navavaranam and Muthuswami Dikshitar's Kamalamba Navavarana Krithis**

**- Anuradha Mahesh**

Among the composers of the Pre-Trinity Period, Ooththukkad Venkata Subbaiyer (1700-1765) occupies an honoured place. He was one of the most prolific, imaginative, original and versatile composers in Indian culture. He was a Naishtika Brahmachari, great personality, a vaggeyakara, a mystic and a Srividya Upasaka who was very much devoted to Lord Krishna. Venkata Kavi took Srividya initiation from Sri. Bhaskararāya who is widely considered an authority on all questions pertaining Srividya Upāsana. His krithis are with dazzling contrasting passages, complex tālas, scholarly lyrics and evocative melody.

Muthuswami Dikshitar (1775-1835), the youngest among the Trinity was also a Srividya Upasaka and a Mahâ Yogi. He was highly proficient in Sanskrit, Astrology, Tanthra Sâstra, Manthra Sâstra and Sangeetham. His works illustrate musical and poetic excellence, intellectual sophistication and soulful devotional lyrics.

**Venkata Kavi and Muthuswami Dikshitar are the only major composers who composed a set of krithis symbolising the Navâvarana worship. Ooththukkad Venkata Kavi composed Kamâkshi Navâvarana while Muthuswami Dikshitar composed Kamalâmba Navâvarana.** These krithis numbering twelve (OVK) and thirteen (MD) respectively, were divinely inspired and exemplary pieces for both lakshya and lakshana values. The emotional appeal of these compositions and the intricacies of rhythm are noteworthy features.

**This seminar presentation attempts to study a brief comparison of Kamâkshi Navâvarana Krithis of Ooththukkad Venkata Kavi and Kamalamba Navavarana Krithis of Muthuswami Dikshitar.** This presentation also aims to bring out the intellectual, aesthetic, philosophical and spiritual aspects of these compositions and how the composers bring out the concept of Sri Chakra and its different aspects, the description of Avaranas, how they relate the work to our rich heritage, by quoting directly from Lalithâ Sahasranâmam, which is a text in Brahmânda Purânâ, Taitthariya Upanishad, rare instances of Lalithôpâkhyânâ, Lalitha Thrishathi, Soundarya Lahari, Srimad Devi Bhâgavatham and many other such sources, using different lyrical expressions. This shows that these composers were not just familiar with these works, but deeply internalized their content and spirit and reproduced them in Avarana Krithis. These monumental creations of Venkata Kavi and Muthuswami Dikshitar reflect their proficiency in Samskritham and the deep erudition in Sangeetham, Sâhityam and Tâlam along with devotion, intellect and a soul that was in a state of spiritual bliss.

The prâsa and other prosodic refinements in the krithis testify their command over the language and gift of poesy. These krithis are Manthra Poorvaka Krithis where several Bîjaaksharas (powerful syllables) find place in their content. **The study also highlights the Rhythmic Excellence of Venkatakavi's Navāvarana Krithis were complex tālams like Khanda Druvam, Khanda Triputa and Sankeerna Matyam can be seen. These Krithis also exemplifies the concept of Kalai Change and Gathi Bhedam.**

**A special reference is made to the Bindu Chakra - the Sarvanandamaya Chakram where HER Majesty Maha Tripurasundari resides with HER Consort as KAMESWARA and KAMESWARI. The concept advaita bhavana or Aham Brahmasmi were duality merges to Pure Consciouness is reflected in this Chakra. Shiva and Shakthi are like the lamp and the light, the flower and its fragrance, honey and its sweetness, milk and its whiteness, word and its meaning, Sun and its heat, moon and the moonlight, grain and oil etc. They exist together. The bottom line is as we cannot separate milk from its whiteness or flower from its fragrance. Similarly in all aspects of Shakthi, Shivam has to be present.**

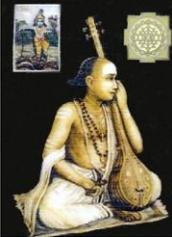
**A study of these compositions will immensely benefit musicians, music teachers, students and passionate Carnatic Music listeners.**

### KĀMĀKSHI NAVĀVARANAMS OF OOTHUKKADU VENKATA KAVI

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### 3. KĀMĀKSHI & KAMALĀMBA NAVĀVARANAMS

#### A Brief Comparison

KĀMĀKSHI		KAMALĀMBA	
			
VENKATAKAVI		MUTHSWAMY DIKSHITAR	

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