

# **DEVELOPMENT OF SADIR IN THE COURT OF RAJA SERFOJI-II (1798-1832) OF TANJORE**

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FOR THE AWARD OF  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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## DECLARATION

I hereby state that the present thesis entitled "DEVELOPMENT OF SADIR IN THE COURT OF RAJA SERFOJI-II (1798-1832) OF TANJORE" has been carried out by me for the full period prescribed under the Ph.D. ordinances of the University.

I declare to the best of my knowledge that no part of this thesis was earlier submitted for the award of the research degree of any University.

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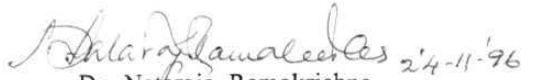
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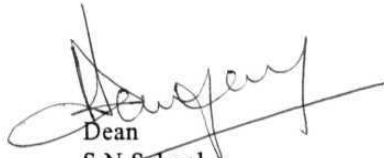
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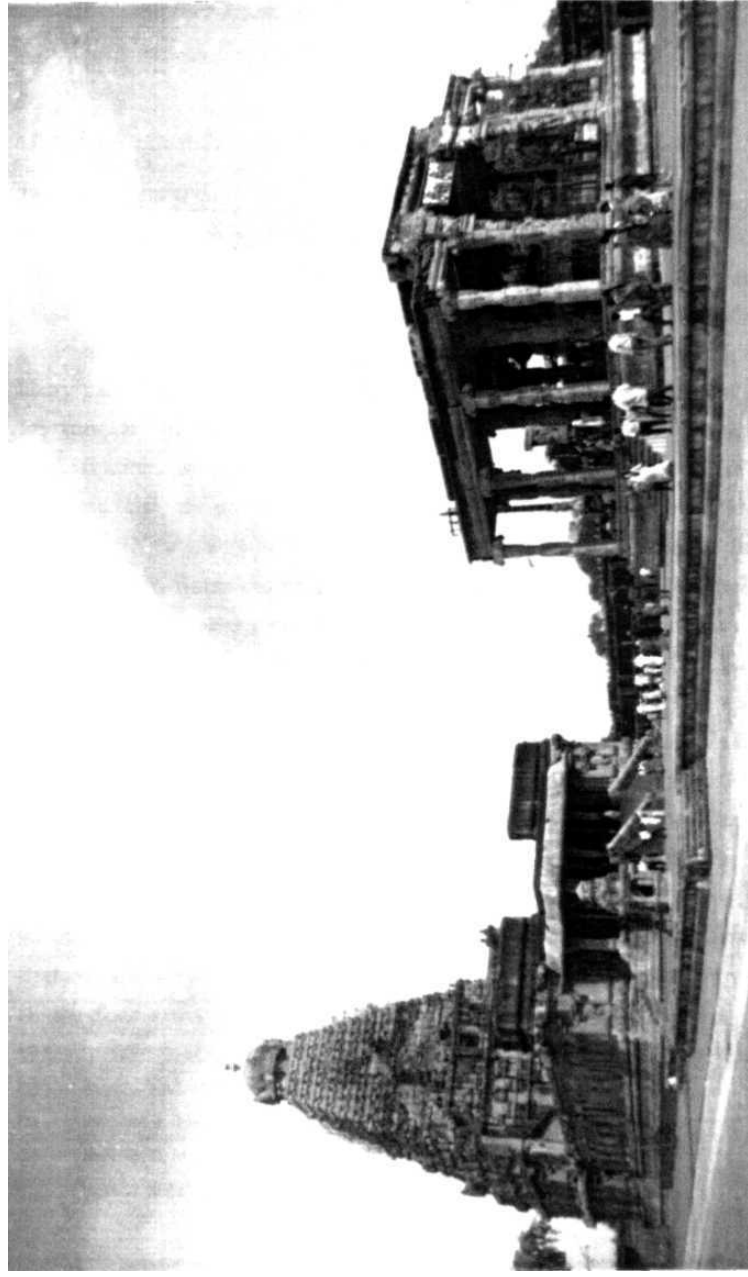
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No.1 Brhadisvaralaya - Thanjavur Big Temple

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Indian dance since ages has been one of the finest expressions of the cultural fabric of India. The nature and essence of Indian dance is creativeness, joyousness and spirituality. This peerless art which has made great strides in the cultural expansion of India has a very holy and a hoary past. A perusal of the recorded history of the Indian dance, proves the antiquity of the art to vedas. In **R̥gveda**,<sup>(1)</sup> the ancient among the scriptures, we get the reference to the term 'Nrtu' or the beautiful danseuse. **Uṣā**, the goddess of dawn, personified in the form of beautiful danseuse 'Nrtu', who with a brilliant smile on her face adorned in splendid pure white costume makes a strikingly charming appearance before the world. Her graceful **gait**<sup>(2)</sup> in the circular movement or **cakra form**<sup>(3)</sup> is indicative of the **bhramari** type mentioned in the **sastra**. In addition to the vedas, most of the epics and works of literature are replete with references regarding the dancing divinities and the dances of the celestial nymphs. In the context of textual source material on the specifics of the art, **Nāṭyaśāstra** is the earliest authentic treatise in Sanskrit written around 200B.C.-200A.D. According to its reputed author sage **Bharata**, the art of **natya** or the dramatic art with its component parts of speech, music, dance, gestures, emotions and sentiments was evolved by Lord **Brahma**, the creator of the Universe by encapsulating the essentials of all the four vedas and its ancillaries. As this art was born out of the vedas, it was dogmatized by its creator as the **pancama** or the fifth veda.

(1) **R̥gveda**, Vol.I, Mandala-I, Sūkta-92, r̥ca-4;

(2) **Ibid**, Vol.II, Mandala-5, Sūkta-80;

(3) **Ibid**, Vol.II, Mandala - 3, Sūkta - 61, r̥ca - 3;  
**R̥gveda**, Vedic Samsodhana□Mandala, Pune, 1931.

Unlike the other four vedas, **Nāṭya** veda, which is the quintessence of the four vedas with its added visual and auditory virtues, was intended by its originator to reach all the sections of the society and embrace the universal life with a globated appeal.

With the passage of time, the twin arts of music and dance have bequeathed a glorious heritage with a pre-conceived aim of devotion to God for spiritual realisation. Convincingly, most of the illustrious authors of the standard treatises on the subjects of dance and music were themselves seers such as Bharata, Nandikesvara, Narada and so on. It is a notable fact that the exquisite creative productions of many an artiste were a resultant feature of their upsurging devotion to God. Dance as a pure offering of art at the feet of the Divinity was considered the best path to attain the Almighty. As the object of religion is also to enable man to attain the supreme, this intimate relationship between religion and dance has necessitated their coexistence. Needless to mention that from time immemorial, they have been functioning with the same specific purpose. In view of this synergistic relationship, dance for centuries with its religious fervour has been nurtured within the sacred precincts of the temple. Temple became the heavenly abode of **fine** arts and dance & music became definite forms of worship giving dance its distinctive religious quality which to this day has remained a satisfying concept to **all**. This sublime approach of the art - 'dancing for divinity' was harnessed in South India by the onset of the 'Bhakti Movement' around 6-8 century A.D. The doctrine of absolute devotion to God inaugurated the new era of spiritual learning in South India with the appearance of the **Saivaite** and **Vaisnavaite** saint bards known as the Nayanmars and the Alvars who provided a **fresh** impetus to the twin arts of music & dance and made an impeccable influence in the minds

of the devout public by their soul-stirring devotional compositions known as Tevarams and Divyaprabandhas. Among the 63 Nayanmars, Appar, Tirujnana Sambandar and Sundarar became highly popular for their 'Tevaram' compositions and Manikkavaccagar for his **Tiruvāccakam**. They were claimed to be the Saivaite Quartette.

Likewise, the collection of the devotional hymns of the 12 Vaisnavaite Saints known as Alvars were termed as 'Divya Prabandham'. These devotional compositions coupled with captivating music moulded and garbed the general public with utmost religious consciousness. Hence dancing with such devotional fervour for these hymns became a regular feature and an indispensable aspect of worship in the temples of South India. The art of dancing in the temples of South India was the exclusive domain of the fairer sex and that they adopted 'Kaisiki Vrtti' or the graceful representation of the dance may be due to the fact that their anatomy highly facilitated the employment of the graceful style 'Kaisiki Vrtti'. A fact to this effect is substantiated in 'Nāṭyaśāstra' of sage Bharata, where we get a fund of information regarding the existence of varying styles (Vrttis), peculiar to different regions of India. In this context states Bharata. "The Kaisiki is the graceful and charming presentation through women characters in colourful costumes indulging in dances and music"<sup>1</sup>. Bharata also observes that. "The southern people have many kinds of dance styles, songs and musical instruments and they employ the Kaisiki Vrtti mostly and cultivate efficient gestures"<sup>(2)</sup>.

Hence, accomplished girls in the field of music and dance were dedicated to the temples and specially recruited to the ritualistic dance services

(1) A Board of Scholars - Translation into English - Introduction - "The Narva Śāstra of Bharatamuni", Sai Satguru Publications - Delhi - P. 19

(2) Ibid - Chapter-14, P.200

of the temple. These girls termed as 'Devadasis' or handmaidens to God were attached to these places of worship. These devadasis were the sole custodians of the art of dancing until the beginning of the 20th century. Though the art practised by them was known by different names right from the period of Sangam age, Chola, Nayak and upto the Maratha period of the 19th century, it (art) finally got rechristened as 'Bharatanatyam' in the 20th century. Hence the present Bharatanatyam in its pure and pristine form which has reached such a pinnacle of excellence over the periods, owes its existence to South India in general and Thanjavur district in particular.

Consequently, certain periods and regions in the history of dance have been marked as unique and significant as they have facilitated and fostered the betterment of the art and its progress towards the spirit of idealism. In this direction, Thanjavur had been blessed with the rule of three great Hindu dynasties - the Cholas, the Nayaks and the Marathas whose munificent and dedicated patronage had ensured to a conspicuous measure, the development of the fine arts, more so music and dance. This unparalleled seat of art which can rightly be hailed as the cradle of Karnatic music and dance, under the aegis of these three dynasties, witnessed an amalgamation of three streams of culture - Cholas(Tamil), Nayaks(Telugu) and Marathas(Marathi) , which richly nourished the growth of the art in myriad dimensions. Though the art of dancing was known under the rubric of Kūttu, Adal, Nātyam, Dasiattam, Bharatam. Nātyamu. Cinnamelam and Sadir, each of these nomenclatures were coined and got established during these three different dynasties which ruled over Thanjavur from 9th to 19th century A.D. In Sangam and the Chola period, it was known as Kuttu, Adal, Nātyam, Dasiattam and so on and during Nayak it was termed as Nātyamu, Kelika; Cinnamēlam

and Sadir in Maratha period respectively. The term 'Sadir' was in popular usage until the Anti-Nautch movement appeared on the dance scenario.

A study of the evolution of the **lāsya** dance (**Kaiśiki** Vrtti pradhanyam) from the onset of its developmental process unfolds a rich cultural heritage and the existence of the magnificent system of dance from the early **Sangam** period itself in South India. “**Sangam**” as the name suggests was the association or academy of scholars and famous poets who from time to time gathered around, discussed and analysed the standard of the works of literature and held periodical discussions and debated on certain important aspects of Tamil literature. In total, we come to understand that there were three Sangam periods, the first, second and third, all placed around 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. Ancient indigenous literature of the Tamil country had three aspects comprising Iyal(poetry), **Isai(music)** and **Nāṭakam** (dramatics). The assimilation of these three aspects marks the concept of Muttamizh. This gestalt view is still held in high esteem even to the present day in Tamilnadu. Copious references and complete picture of the then Music, Dance and Drama that flourished in the ancient Tamil country can be inferred from the several classic treatises of the Sangam age such as 'Tolkappiyam', ‘**Śilappadikāram**’ which speak volumes of the status enjoyed by this many splendoured art and its practitioners.

**Tolkāppiyam(300 B.C):-** Among the oldest literary works in Tamil, providing abundant information regarding the triple arts of dance, music and drama of the ancient Tamils is the Tolkappiyam authored by Tolkappiyar, the great grammarian of the 3rd century B.C. Though the treatise is mainly a work on grammar, it incorporates the dance elements



and also accounts a holistic view of the socio-political, geographical, religious atmosphere and the cultural traditions of the Tamil people. From Tolkappiyam, we learn that all the sections of the people were privileged to take to the art of dancing and those sections of the people who took to the art as their profession, formed an honoured class in the Tamil society. These artists were called by different names in accordance with their proficiency in the different component aspects of the art, be it music, dance or drama. As the art of dancing was referred to as 'Viral' or 'Kūttu', the male professional dancers were termed as 'Kuttars' and the vocalists and the instrumentalists who provided the orchestral support to the dances were called as 'Isai Panargal'. The artists practising the martial art (which was mainly intended to be performed during war time) with its motivating music were referred to as 'Porunar'. Regarding 'Kūttar' and 'Viraliyar' there were no caste restrictions but such a privilege did not apply to 'Panar' or 'Porunar'. Women dancers who were adept in the art of histrionics were known as Viraliyars or Kūttiyars. It is further learnt that these Viraliyars were not only adept in pure and representational dance, 'Nr̥tta' and 'Nr̥tya' but also exhibited capacious knowledge in the field of expressive dance-'Abhinaya', by strictly following the shastric principles enunciated in the then existing Laksana granthas, to the extent of creating aesthetic pleasure.

Interestingly, '**Ulakiyal Valakku**'<sup>(1)</sup> & '**Nataka Valakku**'<sup>(2)</sup>, being the Tamil equivalents of the terms 'Lokadharmi' and 'Nāṭyadharmi' along with Sattvika bhavas also find a mention in Tolkappiyam. Obviously, all these aspects which are veritable treasure house of source material

(1) Tolkappiyam - Porul adhikāram, Ahattianiyal Sutra 53. Cf Dr R. Nāgaswāmy - Dance in Tamil literature - proceedings of 10th Nāṭya Kalā conference - Madras - December 1990 - P.9.

(2) Ibid

suggest that the art of music, dance and drama was prevalent in ancient Tamil country much before the 3rd century B.C.

The 'Kalitohai' - (which is a collection of invocatory songs) belonging to the early Sangam age mentions the Cosmic dance of Lord Siva who is the embodiment of **NādaBrahmā** or sound divine. It gives references about not only the three dance forms performed by the cosmic dancer but also the **talas** pertaining to it<sup>(1)</sup>.

The three dance forms are:-

1. Panda **raṅgam** set to Tūkku talam
2. **Kapālam** set to Pani **tālam**
3. **Koḍugottī** set to śeer talam

These aforesaid dance forms were richly co-ordinated with myriad complex tala patterns, and the rhythmic time measure was provided by none other than the divine consort Uma. It is quite evident from this that there has been a perfect integration of music and dance, performed to definite rhythmic time measure (tala) as early as in the beginning of the first century itself. In ancient Tamil region too, the art of dramatics incorporated the inseparable arts of music and dance. From the ancient commentaries on several works on dramaturgy, we infer copious treatises on the triple arts of music, dance and drama to have been in vogue upto the time of Adiyarkkunallar (12th century A.D.), the great commentator of the famous Epic **Śīlappadikāram**. But unfortunately many such valuable treatises are lost to posterity.

(1) Cf. Dr. Jnana Kulēndran - Pazhan Tamilar Adalil Isai - Tamil University, Thanjavur - 1990 - Ch.1 - P.1

Some of the treatise which have become obsolete are as follows:-

1. Nadaha Tamil Nūl or Gunanūl. This treatise(Nul) on drama-turgy was very much in vogue during Adiyarkkunallar's time.
2. **Bharatam** is understood to be another Tamil classic treatise on dramaturgy (Science of drama).

Some of the treatises that are published are as follows :

1. **Pañcamarabu** - another work on dramaturgy was written by Arivanar. It was published in the year 1973. The text has got **five** component aspects of dance such as -
  - a) **Isai marabu** (music)
  - b) **Vacciya marabu** (speech)
  - c) **Nrtta** marabu (pure dance)
  - d) **Tala marabu** (time measure)
  - e) **Abhinaya marabu** (*mime*)
2. **Bharata Senāpatiyam** by Adi Vayilar was published in 1958 and
3. **Kūttanul** by **Śātanār**(published in 1968) is another such work on the art of dance.

All these above mentioned treatises were very much in practice during Adiyarkkunallar's **period**. Though these works have been published, scholars & critics are doubtful regarding the genuineness of its contents and apprehensive that many interpolations might have taken place.

Apart from the treatises on **dance**, focus was also directed towards the aspect of rhythm which has been a vital component governing the art of music and dance. There is evidence to many works having existed

purely dealing with the aspect of rhythm, but most of these treatises have remained mere names today. ‘**Tālavahaiyōttu**’<sup>(1)</sup> which was in vogue during AdiyarkkunallaVs period is one among such extinct works.

**Silappadikaram:-** (2nd century A.D.) The next important and valuable literary work available in Tamil is 'Silappadikaram' written by the Prince of the Cera royal line Ilango Adigal. With 'Silambu' meaning anklet and ‘**adhikāram**’ - the chapter, the epic beautifully describes in poetic form the theme that centres round an anklet. This monumental work gives an encyclopaedic information regarding the classical as well as the folk arts and provides deep insights into the intricacies and richness of the art form that was in vogue during the Sangam age. With the passage of time, the 'kuttu' dance mentioned in **Tolkāppiyam** was supplemented with enriched melody (Pan) by the professional groups practising the art and during the period of **Śilappadikāram**, the art came to be referred to as ‘**Adal** and **Nāṭyam**’<sup>(2)</sup>. The ‘**Araṅgēṭṭrakāḍai**’ chapter of **Silappadikaram** gives a voluminous description of the beautiful court dancer 'Madhavi's' (one of the three main characters in the epic) initiation into the art, her rigorous training under a versatile guru for seven long years and finally her exquisite maiden performance at the age of 12 which was witnessed by no less a person than the Chola King Karikala Peruvalathin and other members of the royalty and the nobility. This same chapter gives a detailed account of the rules and principles pertaining to the dance music i.e. vocal as well as instrumental dance musical accompaniments. The importance of the proper instrumentation i.e., tuning and playing of different instruments such as yazh, flute and drum and the manner in which the combination of these instruments should exist and be

(1) Cf.Dr. Jñāna Kulendran - Pazhan Tamilar Adalil I śai p. 17.

(2) **Śilappadikāram** - 3, 40. Cf.Dr. Jñāna Kulendran - P.3.

executed which ultimately facilitate in heightening the aesthetic pleasure of the dance have been mentioned in elaborate measure

In addition to this, *Silappadikāram* clearly states the qualifications of a good dance teacher, known as 'Adal āśriyan'<sup>(1)</sup>, vocalist and other members of the orchestral troupe. Regarding the dance teacher, it mentions that the adal asriyan should be proficient not only in the eleven types of dances, but also should be well versed in its music and must have thorough knowledge in the allied arts such as music, literature and should be capable of playing on different musical instruments too.

As mentioned earlier the Arangetrakadai chapter gives a detailed description of the maiden performance of court dancer Madhavi and the eleven types of dances performed by her. Madhavi opined as the descendant of the celestial dancer *Urvaśi*, was considered as the ideal dancer endowed with physical charm and beauty. She was adept in the eleven types of dances, well versed in music and performed these dances strictly adhering to the principles enunciated in the *śāstras*<sup>(2)</sup>. Such details have been mentioned *in extenso* in that particular chapter.

It is learnt that the debut of Madhavi is said to have commenced by rendering the invocatory songs called the 'Vara' or 'Tevara *pāḍal*' collectively sung by a group of songsters including the old dancers. These Vara or Tevara hymns (which have lot of Bhakti components in it) were intended for the successful completion of the programme, can presumably be compared to the 'Todaya *maṅgaḷam*' songs of later 'Sadir' and present day 'Bharatanatyam' recitals. After these invocatory songs, follow the *mēlaprāpti* or the orchestral co-ordination which consisted of the harmonious blending and tuning of different instruments like the Flute.

(1) *Silappadikāram* - 3,12-25 Cf Dr Jñāna Kulēndran - Op cit. P4

(2) *Ibid* - 3. 40 Cf Dr Jnana feulendran - Op. cit, Pp 23-24

Yazh and other percussive instruments. This orchestra was termed as 'āmañdrikai'<sup>(1)</sup>. After these initial proceedings, the danseuse is said to have made her entrance from the right side of the stage placing her right foot first. This tradition is still followed even to this day in the dance recitals. From the description of the eleven types of dances, we infer that unlike the present day tradition of the dance depicting different characters by a dancer adorning a specific costume(Ekaharya), danseuse Madhavi is said to have adorned different costumes suggestive of the character portrayed by her in all the eleven dances.

All this solid information not only reflects the degree of perfection attained by dance and music of that period but **also** enables to have a clear understanding of the details and the standard of the art of the bygone centuries.

Chola Period (Later half of 1st century to 1279 A.D.): With the inauguration of Bhakti movement, the advent of interest among kings in Temple construction and in the art of music and dance associated with the sacred edifices captured South India especially the Thanjavur during 9th and 10th centuries A.D. which had been the capital of the Imperial Cholas. The royal patronage of the Chola dynasty found expression in several ways. The cholas were instrumental in the construction of many splendid temples. The 'Bṛhadīśvarālaya', popularly known as 'Big temple' (periya kōvil) of Tanjore bears ample testimony to the stupendous patronage of 'Rājarāja Chola-I' (985-1014 A.D.) who was not only the brain child behind this monumental temple but also made elaborate arrangements for the temple dance rituals by transferring 400 dancing girls<sup>(2)</sup> (Devadāsīs) from 50 temples to this sacred edifice. He

(1) Śilappadikāram - 3, 138-142.

(1) South Indian Inscriptions(SII), Vol.II, No.66



No 2     **Lord Nataraja** in the Vimana on  
the Southern side of the Big Temple



No. 3     **Raja Raja** The Great (985-1014 A.D.)

also allocated separate colonies around the temple to the musicians and dancers attached to this temple, thereby ensuring the artists with permanent settlement. This seems to be one of the glowing **examples** of the King's generous patronage to the arts. The names and addresses of these dancers and musicians can be learnt from the wall inscriptions of the Big temple. The appointment of 12 *nattuvanārs*<sup>(1)</sup> known as 'ādal-āśān' for the purpose of imparting sound training to these dancers can be inferred from these inscriptions. It further throws light on the appointment of 5 vocalists called 'gana pāḍigaḷ'<sup>(2)</sup>. The male and female vocalists were known as 'Gandharvas'<sup>(3)</sup> and 'Gandharvis'<sup>(4)</sup> respectively. The other musicians appointed<sup>(5)</sup> were -

- 3 flute players,
- 2 udukku players,
- 3 vina players
- 2 maddalam players,
- 3 śāṅku or conch players,
- 5 pakkavādyakārar or supporting instrumentalists

During Rajaraja Chola's period, we come to know that based on language, two types of dance forms emerged - 'Aryakūttu'<sup>(6)</sup> and the 'Tamil kūttu'<sup>(7)</sup>. The dances performed to the songs rendered in Sanskrit language were termed as 'Arya kuttu' and likewise to Tamil songs were referred to as 'Tamil kuttu'. The vocalists accompanying the Arya kuttu were known

(1) S.I.I., Vol.II, No.66. Line 401

(2) Ibid - Lines 413-414.

(3) Ibid - Line 441

(4) Ibid - Line 468

(5) Ibid Lines 422-440

(6) S.I.I. No.154 of 1895

(7) S.I.I. No.90 of 1932



as Aryam paduvor and for Tamil kuttu as Tamil paduvor. The appointment of vocalists for these dances was dependent upon their mastery over the languages Sanskrit and Tamil respectively. The fact that the dancers and musicians were insisted upon to have a thorough knowledge and deep understanding of the language in order to efficiently convey the import of the songs through their soulful music, is quite evident from these invaluable evidences from the inscriptions.

In the Chola period, names of the dancing girls were prefixed with the term 'nakkan' taken from Tamil 'Nam-akkan',<sup>(1)</sup> which means 'our elder sister'. These devadasis performed pure dance and abhinaya to the Tēvāram songs<sup>(2)</sup>, and the devadasis who excelled the co-dancers in their histrionic abilities were conferred titles such as Sivaññāna Sambandar Talaikōli<sup>(3)</sup> \*. It is obvious that this dancer must have been accomplished and showed consummate expertise in performing to the tevaram hymns of Sambandar, one among the Saivaite Quartette. Another dancer was given the title of 'Nakkan Nirani pavalā kuṇḍram'<sup>(4)</sup>. She was given this title following the first line of the tevaram song Nirani—  
kuṇḍram for which she must have been an expert in performing abhinaya.

On par with these dancers, the dance teachers were also privileged to receive honorific and titles. The different titles conferred on efficient dance teachers were 'Talaikōl āśān', "Nṛtta vinoda vadya mārāyan"<sup>(5)</sup> and so on. It is learnt from inscriptions that not only musicians but even

(1) Saskia.C.Kersenboom - 'Nitya Sumāṅgali', The field research financed by the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) P. 143.

(2) Annual Report on Epigraphy (ARE)-1913:P.118&127 and-S.II.Vol.II-No.66

(3) S.I.I. No.231 of 1932 (\*Talaikōli was the title given to the female dancer of Chola period)

(4) S.I.I. Vol.II, No.66 Line 233

(5) Ibid, Line, 441

Kings took the title "Nrtta Vinōda" signifying as "one delighting in **dance**".<sup>(1)</sup>

The platforms for staging dramas, dance performances and such allied arts during the Chola period were known as Nrtta mandapam<sup>(2)</sup>, Nāṭaka Sālai<sup>(3)</sup> Nanavidha Nataka śālai<sup>(4)</sup> and Natya mandapam<sup>(5)</sup>.

In addition to these honours, the artists of the Chola period were paid **emoluments**<sup>(6)</sup> too.

1. The dancing girl was paid 100 kalams of paddy per year.
2. The dance teacher was remunerated with 200 kalams of paddy per year.
3. The lute player - 175 kalams of paddy per year
4. The drummer - 100 kalams of paddy per year
5. The musicians appointed to sing in Sanskrit and in Tamil - 150 kalams of paddy per year.
6. The persons stitching the dance costume - 150 kalams of paddy per year.

For regular dance performances in the temple the Kings were said to have donated lands termed as 'Pōkam'<sup>(7)</sup>, which in Sanskrit means 'bhoga' or enjoyment. 'Nrtta pōkam' was given specifically for the maintenance of temple dancers.

(1) Cf. Dr. V Raghavan - Bharata Natya: The Journal of the Music Academy, Madras: Vol.XLV: P.238

(2) S.I.I. No.340of1914

(3) S.I.I.Vol.II No.124

(4) Annual Report on Epigraphy(ARE)-1925.Pp. 11-13

(5) S.I.I. Vol. 2, No. 178

(6) S.I.I.Vol.II, Part.I-III

(7) Cf. Saskia C. Kersenboom-Nitya Sumangali: Ch.I.P.57.

Lands given to dancers, dance masters and music teachers on account of their individual merit were referred to as 'kani'<sup>(1)</sup> (fruit - reward). 'Patiyilar kani' was given to female temple-dancers, 'Nattuvakkani' to dance masters and 'panakkani' to music teachers respectively.

Along with the temple dancers, court dancers too enjoyed high respect during the Chola period. It is learnt that a court dancer by name "Anukkiyar Paravai Naṅkaiyār" was the most favourite and intimate to King Rajendra I (1012-1044), who is said to have named a village after her as 'Paravaipuram' and a temple as "Paravai Īśvaram"<sup>(2)</sup>. Such abundance of epigraphical records of the Chola period serve as authentic evidences in unraveling the legacy of the art and also the distinguished status enjoyed by the artists.

Nayak Period (A.D. 1532 - 1675) :- Next to the golden era of the Chola dynasty followed the rule of the Nayak Kings, who were equally great lovers and promoters of art and literature. Though initially appointed as viceroys under the Vijayanagar empire, with the Talikota war of 1565 there came an end to the Vijayanagar empire and the Nāyaks formed their own separate autonomous kingdom in Tanjore and their glorious rule lasted for more than a century.

The culturally vibrant atmosphere of the Thanjavur during the rule of Chola dominance was further enhanced by an even more pulsating artistic activity that triggered on account of the bountiful patronage extended by the Nāyak rulers. The cultural traditions of the famed Vijayanagar empire seems to have had a definite and a lasting impact on the Thanjavur Nayak rulers, who in turn were responsible in ushering a glorious era

(1) Nitvasumangali. Op.cit.

(2) Ibid., P.58;

of fine Telugu literature in Tanjore which was till then a Tamil province. This undoubtedly is a matter of approbation. Tanjore indeed became the abode of many a talented artiste and scholar in the sphere of music, dance and Telugu literature.

There was an exuberant growth of Sanskrit and Telugu literature and King 'Raghunatha Nayaka' and his son 'Vijayarāghava Nayaka' were not only liberal patrons but were men of letters, accomplished royal artists and were credited with many scholarly writings in the field of music, dance and yaksagana compositions. Telugu yaksaganas, a form of dance-drama with its several innovative changes in its technique gained highest popularity during the Nayak rule.

It was during the reign of 'Acyutappa Nayaka (A.D. - 1560 - 1600)' that the temple 'Unnathapuri'. situated on an elevated site as the name suggests, which is 18 kms from Thanjavur was named as 'Acyutapuri' also called as 'Melattur'. This temple was constructed during the period of King Vikrama Chola (A.D. - 1125 - 1150). It is learnt that during the King Acyutappa's regime, the King along with his ministerial fame Govinda Diksitar made several renovations to the temple and the magnanimous ruler who was indeed a lover of arts, endowed the entire village to 500 brahmin families called 'Bhāgavatārs'. It is in reverence to the generous king's endowment of Unnatapuri, that the village was renamed as 'Acyutapuram' or 'Acyutābdi'<sup>(1)</sup>. In due course, the Bhagavatars who were the practitioners and promoters of the art of Nrtya natakas or dance dramas, made the village, the centre of the famous Bhagavatamela natakas. It is this privileged place, which later produced many illustrious

(1) S. Natarajan - Melattur and the Bhāgavatamēla Tradition. Bhāgavatamēla Nāṭya Nāṭakam, a brochure of the Melattūr Sri Lakṣmī Narasimha Jayanthi Bhagavatamela Nāṭya Nāṭaka Sangam, Thanjavur, 1995, P.2.

composers in the field of music and dance, whose names have been prefixed with the name of the village Melattur and are remembered by the dance world as Melattur Verikatarama Sastri, Melattur Virabhadrayya, Melattur Kasinathayya and so on.

Raghunatha Nāyaka (A.D. 1600 - 1634):- The glory of the Nayak rule reached its zenith during the reign of Raghunatha Nayaka, son of King Acyutappa Nayaka. Highly proficient in Sanskrit and Telugu languages, the King was a versatile composer, musician and of all a musicologist of high repute. Raga 'Jayantasena'<sup>(1)</sup> and 'Ramananda tāla'<sup>(2)</sup> were the inventions born out of his creative faculties is inferred from 'Sāṅgita Sudha', a treatise on the theory and practice of music, the authorship of which has been ascribed to King Raghunatha.

**Jayantasenādīmarāga ramanandaditalan racayanvis'esan**

**Sāṅgita vidya samupādīśastvam**

**Vipāṇcikāvāḍavicakṣaṇānām.<sup>(3)</sup>**

Though there has been considerable debate regarding its authorship, Verikatamakhi the author of the magnum opus "Caturdandi Prakāśika" has made an explicit mention in his work that the musical treatise was written by his father Govinda Diksitar who was a Philosopher, guide and Minister to King Raghunatha Nāyaka and his two predecessors King Acyutappa and King Sevappa Nayaka. Nevertheless, King Raghunātha was the author of many meritorious Kavyas such as Parijataharana prabandha, Valmīkacaritra, Acyutendrābhyudayam, Gaṇḍamōksam, Nalacaritram and Sri Rukmini Kṛṣṇavivaha yaksagāna is inferred from

(1) P.S. Sundaram Ayyar and S. Subrahmanya Śāstri, Ed., - Sāṅgita Sudha - The Music Academy Publication, Madras- 1940, P.5, SL. 64.

(2) **Ibid**

(3) **Ibid**

'**Saṅgita** Sudha'. This bears ample testimony to his erudite scholarship in Laksna and Laksya of music and dance. In this direction, a **śloka**<sup>(1)</sup> from **Saṅgita** Sudha is cited below.

Sri parijataharana prabandham **citramca**  
valmikicaritrakavyam  
tatha Acyutendrābhyudayam **gajendramōksam caritram**  
.....nalasya citram||  
Sri **rukminikrsna vivāha** yaksagana  
prabandhanadinaikamedan **nirmāya**  
**vāgbhīrṇipunārthabhāgbhīrvidvatkavinām**  
**vidadhasidrsam ||**

In most of his works, we find an extensive treatment regarding the mode of playing the vina and other technical aspects related to the instrument. This **reveals**<sup>d</sup> the King's expertise in handling this particular instrument and perhaps owing to this fact that the 24 fretted vina was named after the King as the '**Raghunātha Mela Vina**'. The term '**mēla**' which means a group or association came into popular usage during Nayak period which denoted the orchestra comprising several musical instruments. Obviously the usage of this term '**mela**' got extended over the years and was suffixed to the terms 'nattuva' and 'natya' representing the female and male dance traditions indicative of solo dance and dramatic art traditions respectively. Among the several kavyas authored by the King, 'Valmiki **Caritra**'<sup>(2)</sup>, a fine kavya in Telugu signifies the capacious knowledge of King Raghunatha in the theory and practice of the art of dancing. This work describes the beautiful dances of the celestial nymphs 'UrvasV and 'Rambha'. **Rambha** is described as the exponent of '**deśi natya**'

(1) **Saṅgita Sudhā**, Op. cit., P.5; Sl. 62-63

(2) **Dr.S.Seetha- 'Tanjore As a Seat of Music'**. University of Madras, 1981,P.36.

such as **perāṇi**, danda **lāśya**, **kundali** and so on. The work also deals with the technical aspects concerning the dance such as **Hastābhinaya**, Sarirabhinaya, Padabhedas, all of which have been given an adequate treatment in the earlier scientific treatises on dance. Some of the talas mentioned in the work are Hamsalila, **Kaṅkāla**, Vilokitam, Mattiga and so on. The names of these talas are not found in the practising tradition of the present day music and dance. In addition to this, the work gives a detailed account of the different musical instruments, such as **mukhavinā**, Kinnari, Tambura handled by the women musicians of the orchestral troupe. The depth with which the royal composer **dealt-with** even the minutest details and technicalities of dance reveals his proficiency and profound scholarship in the subject of dance. In all respects, such intricate details regarding dance makes one feel the work more to be a treatise on dance. Many distinguished scholars, learned poets, musicians and dancers who adorned his court had invariably eulogised their patron's extraordinary talents and artistic accomplishments in most of their celebrated works. They had further hailed him as 'Abhinava **Bhoja**'<sup>(1)</sup> and 'Bharata **Vidyadhurandhara**'<sup>(2)</sup>.

1. Abhinava bhojaraja **bhirudāṅkundu** Sri Raghunatha Souriki.
2. Bharatavidyadhurandhanindouta **rāṅgasthalamburamālaṅkṛtamcēsi**.

He had also been referred to as '**Danavinōda**', as he had endowed innumerable villages to the Brahmins.

In recognition of the talents of his illustrious court **poets**, the King is said to have performed **kanakābhisēkam** (ablution with gold) to many a scholar such as **Yājñanārāyaṇa** Dikṣita, the author of **Sahitya Ratnākara**

(1) **Cemakura Venkata**kavi - Vijaya Vilasa - Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library (GOML), Madras; P.23-Vsrse 53

(2) **Ibid** - P.10-Verse 21

and acclaimed poetess Madhuravani and conferred titles on them. It was during King Raghunatha's reign that 'Ksetrayya', the peerless composer of padas visited the Tanjore court. A *Kaṇḍapadyam*<sup>(1)</sup> by Ksetrayya best illustrates the celebrated poet's intention of visiting the court of such an outstanding royal artiste like King Raghunatha.

**Tamu** dame vatturarthulu

**Krama** meriginadata kadaku **rammannara**

Kamalambul unnacotiki

**Bhramarambulan** Acyutendra **Raghunathanrpa**.

King Vijayarāghavanāyaka(A.D. 1634-1673): The cultural fragrance of the Tanjore court was kept afresh by Vijayaraghava Nayaka, the son of King Raghunatha who ruled over Thanjavur from 1634-1673 A.D. The king was a past master in the theory and practice of the art of music and dance is evident from the innumerable yaksaganas authored by him. His unsurpassed artistic abilities have been extolled in the creative productions of his court poets. Among his renowned court poets was his own minister **Veṅkaṭamakhi**, the author of '**Caturdandi prakāśika**', a magnum opus, which has remained as a sturdy base for South Indian music. He had been accredited with the formulation of the 72 **mēlakarta** scheme contributing to the **systematisation** of the South Indian raga system. Another eminent poet of his court was Cengalvakala Kavi, author of '**Rajagopāla Vilāsamu**'<sup>(2)</sup>, a fine prabandha in Telugu which gives a complete picture of music, dance and literary activities of the royal court of King Vijayaraghava as well as the biographical details of the royal patron.

(1) MSS. No.2813, Des.Cat. of Telugu MSS-Vol. 12-Andhra Kōmudi-Madras Oriental Manuscripts Library; Cf. **B.Rajanikanta Rao**-"Ksetrayya and his Padams" -The Journal of The Music Academy-Madras-1982, Vol.LIII, P.115.

(2) N. Venkata Rao-Ed.. "Rajagopāla Vilasamu" of **Cengalvakala Kavi-Tanjore** Sarasvati **Mahāl**(TSM) Series No.33. 1951.



The work describes in five cantos the sportive deeds of Lord Kṛṣṇa with his Asta Nayikas and vividly glorifies the origin of **Mannārgudi**, which is proudly referred to as 'Daksina Dvaraka' or the Dvaraka of the South. The work also gives a detailed picture of the cultural scenario of King **Vijayarāghava's** period. The author describes the palace 'Vijaya Vilasa' adorned with the literary banner '**Sārādādhvaja**' which signifies to the rare genius of King Vijayaraghava in the field of music, dance and literature. The work further reveals that the king seated on the throne with the 'Sahityaraya pendera' adorning his ankle (indicative of his unsurpassed skill) witnessed the beautiful dances performed by the court dancers. The existence of different kinds of dances performed by the most skillful dancers who excelled in a particular natya is inferred from the section '**Sabhanātyavarnana**'<sup>(2)</sup> (verse 21-28). The importance of specialisation in a specific dance form by the court dancers of the Nayak period is a noteworthy feature of inference from this valuable work. The names of these dancers who were proficient in the different dance numbers are given below :-

<u>Name of the Nāṭya<sup>(2)</sup></u>	<u>Name of the dancer</u>
Caupada	<b>Rūpavati</b>
Sabda <b>Cintāmani</b>	Champakavalli
Jakkani	<b>Mūrti</b>
Koravu	<b>Komalavalli</b>
<b>Navapadam</b>	Lokanayaki
<b>Deśī</b>	Sasirekha
Darupadam	Ratnagiri
<b>Perani</b>	Bhagirati

(1) **Rājagopāla Vilasamu**, Op.cit., - Sabharatvavarnana - 1st **Aśvasa**, **Verses** 21-28.

(2) Ibid - **P.9, Verse** - 23.

In addition to these dancers, famed dancer Muddu **Candrarekha**<sup>(1)</sup>, who was initially in the court of Vira Venkataraya (1504-1616 A.D.) was profusely honoured with several titles and biruda **vādyas** by King Vijayaraghava. She had the unique privilege of performing the first dance in the court. Pada as a dance composition became highly popular during Vijayaraghava's **period**. The dancers in the court were said to have performed many Madana & Dutya padas, Navaratna **mālīka** and other 'Laksya **nāṭyas**'<sup>(2)</sup>.

From this work, we learn that Cengalva Kalakavi, who was the teacher of the famous poetesses **Rāmabhadrāmba** and **Kṛsnāji**<sup>(3)</sup>, was duly honoured with royal insignia such as palanquin studded with emeralds, pearl necklaces etc., and was granted a beautiful palace and agraahas\* by King Vijayaraghava in recognition to his high poetical talents. Another notable poetess to have ornamented his court was Pasupuleti **Rangājamma**. She was the authoress of **fine yakṣagānas** and prabandhas in Telugu such as **Uśāpariṇayamu**, Mannarudasa Vilasamu, **Rāmāyana saṅgraha**, Bharata saṅgraha and Bhagavata **saṅgraha**, most of which were dedicated to her patron. She had the unique honour of receiving **Kanakābhisēkam** at the hands of her illustrious patron who in turn had his own way of bestowing laurels on his distinguished court poets, scholars and dancers. **Likewise** Ksetrayya, the celebrated composer of padas was said to have received royal honours by singing 1000 padas in the court of King Vijayaraghava. This is elucidated from the pada 'Vedukato' in Devagandhari raga, Adi **tāla**, also popularly known as 'Meruva **padam**'.

"Cakkaga veyi **padamulu palakariṅcukogāne** bahumana **mippince**."

1) **Rājagopāla Vilasamu**, Op.cit., - P.9 -Verse 22

(2) **Ibid - P.9- Verse 23**

(3) **Ibid - P.12-Verse 30**

• The residential quarters for the brahmins are referred to as Agraahas.

Another pada - **Sāmānyamukāde** - **vāni** pondu in raga **Kāmbhōji**, Capu **tala**, describes the unique characteristics and the literary and artistic accomplishments of the King. The **Carana** of the pada thus speaks -

"One must be mature and clever and respond to his poetic and lyrical exercises, efficient so as to read and write his lovely lyrics and, as a musician, capable of presenting the charms in melody.

Must be dexterous in dance, softly stroking on Tambura, expanding melodic structures, should sing away sonorous songs about him and talk, preconceiving his whims, my **dear**"<sup>(1)</sup>

Hence, it is not an easy virtue to win over his love.

Surprisingly we do not find the **mudra** 'muvvagopāla' in this **padam**. From the bulk of Ksetrayya padams, there are 12 such padams which bear the name of Vijayaraghava Nayaka. Owing to the similarity in style and expression it is presumed that these padas in all probability must have been written by Ksetrayya who had paid many visits to the Tanjore Court during the Nayak rule. The two **padas**<sup>(2)</sup> with Vijayaraghava **mudra** are-

1. Dontara videmuto na **Cēnta** rakura 'Don't come near me, with a pile of folded **betal** leaves and nuts' in **Rāga Punnāgavarāli**.
2. Sudina **mayane** i proddu. - 'today is auspicious day' , in **Kambhoji** raga.

Among the prolific writings of King Vijayaraghava, Yaksaganas in Telugu form a major part.

(1) B. **Rajanikaṇṭa** Rao - **Ksetrayya**, Sahitya **Akademi** Publication. **New Delhi** -1981 P.61.

(2) **Ebid.**, Pp.62-63

Some of his creditable works are -

- a) Prahlada Caritramu
- b) **Pūtanaharanamu**
- c) **Raghunāthābhyudayamu**
- d) Raghunatha **nāyakābhyudamu** (Dvipda **kāvya**)<sup>(1)</sup>
- e) Vipranarayana Caritra.

In most of his works, there is definite treatment of dance incorporated in it which only points to his interest and love for the art. In Prahlada **Caritrayaksagāna**, the royal author describes the dances performed in the court of the demon king Hiranyakasipu by the court dancers.

Raghunathabhyudayayaksagana and Raghunathanayakabhyudayamu, a dvipada **kāvya** are akin to each other regarding the thematic content. Both the works centre round the love of a court dancer for the King who, conveys her feelings to the King through a messenger upon which the King meets his beloved and accepts her love.

The uniqueness of Vijayaraghava's Yaksagana Composition is that it adopts dancemusical forms called **darus** and prose dialogues instead of the conventional metres such as Ardha Candrika, dhavala etc. Such an innovation born out of the creative mind of Vijayaraghava Nayaka seems to have had its sway on later Yaksagana compositions.

**Raghunāthanāyakābhyudayam** discusses in detail the daily routine of King Raghunatha, with special reference to his royal court ceremonials. Several names of the dancers accomplished in different types of dances have been mentioned in this work. “**Rūpavati** is said to have showed

(1) N. Venkataramanayya - Introduction - Raghunatha Navakabhvudavamu and Raghunāthābhyudayamu - T.S.M. Series No.32 - 1951, P.9.

the padacali; Candrarekha performed **perañī**, **Sasīrekha** displaying her skill in the rare **kōpus**, (modes of dance) sang the Jakkini, LokanayakT and Kiravani danced **durupada-kēḷika** and durusaina kopu; Some sang Koravanji, Sivalila and **Gujurāti-desī**<sup>(1)</sup> are all explicitly mentioned in the work. Among these different dances, '**darupada kēḷika**' which is also called as Dhruvapada\* a composition with srngararasa having "1 to 3 **caranams**, is sung and danced in **Vilambalaya**"<sup>(2)</sup> "Durusaina\*\* Kopu", the term Durusu means aggressive and fast. Kopu means variation of music and **dance**<sup>(3)</sup>. Hence this seems to be a type of dance in which song is to be rendered in fast tempo accompanied by an equally brisk and vigorous dancing. The work further mentions that several women artists were said to have exhibited their individual skills in playing on musical instruments such as **murali**, **rabab**, **tambūra**, **ravanahasta** and so on. Likewise Mannarudeva, the talented son of Vijayaraghava Nayaka was the author of Hemabja Nayika **Svayamvaram**<sup>(4)</sup> a yaksagana creditable for its literary aspects. This work deals with the celebration of the marriage of Sri Rajagopalasvamy,(the family deity of the Nayaks)with **Hēmābjanāyikā**. **Vijayarāghavābhyaudayam**, also from the pen of Mannarudeva is unfortunately not available.

Hence these bio-graphic panegyric works are not only useful for the literary world but more so valuable as these are the treasured source material for the posterity to assess and understand the nature and the standard of the art of the glorious Nayak period.

(1) N. Venkataramanayya & M. Somasēkhara Sārma - Ed. Raghunāthābhyaudayam -T.S.M.Series No.32; 1951 ,Pp.15-16.

• The word **Daru** is a derivative of the ancient musical form dhruva. Dhruvapada is akin to **Dhruvad**, a Hindustani musical form **sung** in slow tempo.

(2) Dr. Arudra - Telugu Dance Traditions of Tanjore Court -Journal of Śrī Śhanmukhānandā fine arts and Sangeeta Sabha; Vol.XIV-1988, P.21.

\*\* Durusaina means one that is brisk and vigorous.

(3) Dr. Arudra, Ibid.

(4) Cf.The Journal of the Music Academy -Madras; 1982 - Vol. XLVIII, P. 150.

### The Marathas of Tanjore :- (A.D. 1676 - 1855)

After the end of the Nayak rule, Thanjavur witnessed another distinguished rule with Maratha dynasty ascending to power under the headship of King Venkoji alias **Ekoji-I**, the eldest brother of Chatrapati Sivaji in 1676 A.D. The Marathas continued the legacy of the royal patronage to art and literature on par with their predecessors.

Admittedly, the praiseworthy aspect of these rulers was that they quickly identified themselves, through the process of acculturation with their subjects and not only mastered South Indian languages but became consummate exponents of art and literature. Naturally this prompted and motivated them to author several treatises relating to music and dance. Most of the Maratha Kings were men of letters and musicologists and the brilliant literary renaissance of the period was mainly due to the inspiring works of highly accomplished Kings Sahaji-II, **Tulaja-I**, **Pratāpasimha** and Serfoji-II and their renowned court composers.

It was during the Maratha period that the 'Dasiattam' - came to be known as 'Sadir' which is presently called as Bharatanatyam. The dance in the temple and sadir (**āṭṭam**) performed at the court steadily attained high level of excellence especially during the period of King Serfoji-II (1798-1832).

**Sāhaji-II(A.D.-1684-1712)** :- King Venkoji died in the year 1683 and was succeeded by his eldest son Sahaji-II who ruled Thanjavur from 1684 to 1711 A.D. Sahaji's two younger brothers **Sarabhoji-I** and **Tukkoji-I** alias **Tulaja-I** ruled jointly from Sakkotai near **Kumbakonam** and Mahadevapattnam near Mannargudi respectively.

Though Sahaji was enthroned at a tender age of 12, it is known from the related literature of the period that the young King with the passage

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graph TD
    BF[Bhosala Family] --> E1[Ekoji-I alias Venkoji  
(1676-1683)]
    E1 --> S2[S'ahaji-II  
(1684-1712)]
    E1 --> S1[Sarabhoji alias  
Serfoji-I  
(1712-1728)]
    S1 --> K[R'at'u R'aja  
the pretended son  
of Serfoji-I  
(1738)]
    K --> E2[Ekoji-II  
alias  
B'ava Saheb  
(1736-1737)]
    E2 --> A[Amara Simha  
(1787-1798)]
    A --> T1[Tulaja-I alias Tukkoji  
(1728-1736)]
    A --> T2[Tulaja-II  
(1763-1787)]
    T2 --> S3[Sarabhoji-II (adopted son)  
alias Serfoji-II  
(1798-1832)]
    S3 --> S4[Sivaji-II  
(1832-1855)]
  
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**Ekaji-I alias Venkoji**  
(1676-1683)

Śāhaji-II  
(1684-1712)

**Sarabhoji**  
alias  
**Serfoji-I**  
(1712-1728)

**Tulaja-I alias Tukkoji**  
(1728-1736)

Ekaji-II  
alias

**Bava Saheb**  
**(1736-1737)**

**Kāṭu Rāja**  
the pretended son  
of Serfoji-I  
(1738)

**Sujanabai-Wife of Ekoji-II  
(1737-1738)**

**Amara Simha  
(1787-1798)**

Pratāpa Simha  
(1739-1763)

Tulaja-II  
(1763-1787)

**Sarabhoji-II (adopted son)**  
**alias Serfoji-II**  
**(1798-1832)**

**Sivāji-II**  
(1832-1855)

of time, proved to be an able administrator who strived for the prosperity of his subjects and being a learned person, took immense interest in the promotion of art and literature.

Sahaji's interest in spiritual pursuits is made evident from his association with many Saint composers of his period such as Bodhendra Sarasvati, **Sadāśiva Brahmendra**, Sridhara Vehkatesa **Ayyavāl** of Tiruvisanallur. '**Sāhendra Vilāsa**'<sup>(1)</sup>, a superb Kavya written by the Saint poet Sri Ayyaval deals with Sahaji's life, his cultural and spiritual attainments and expounds him as an exponent of advaitic philosophy. There was a bulk of such philosophical works to have been written by many Saint composers out of which one such manuscript in Tamil known as the 'Advaita **Kirtana**'<sup>(2)</sup>, of the period mentions that Sahaji became a yogi towards the end of his life. From the contemporary records of the period, we learn that Sahaji continued the old order of patronage by gifting villages or aghrahams in appreciation and encouragement of those scholars who had to their credit literary productions of high merit.

Like his predecessor Acyutappa Nayaka, Sahaji was said to have presented a village, naming it as Sahajirajapuram to 46 **pandits**<sup>(3)</sup> of his court. The contribution of his court poets and the rich output of literature by way of Kavyas, Natakas, Nrtyanatakas of the period are highly appreciable.

**Srīgārāmāñjari Sāhaiivam**<sup>(4)</sup>, a drama dealing with the life of Sahaji, written by Periyappakavi, a court poet who won many accolades for his

(1) Dr. V. **Raghavan** - Ed., - **Sāhendra Vilasa of Sridhara Venkatesa Ayyavāl**: TSM Series. No.54.

(2) Tamil Manuscript - (MSS) I. No.631 - T.M.S.S.M. Library ; also **K.R.** Subramanian - 'The **Maratha Rāias** of Tanjore': - 1928 , P.33.

(3) '**Sāhendra Vilasa**' T.S.M.Series No.54 Pp.37-38.

(4) A Triennial Catalogue of Sanskrit **MSS**, Vol.II Pt.I



MARATHA KINGS OF TANJORE



No.4 **Sāhaji-II** (1684-1712 AD.)



No.5 **Serfoji-I** (1712-1728 A.D.)



No.6 **Tulaja-I** (1728-1736 AD)



No.7 **Pratapasimha** (1739-1763 A.D.)



No.8 **Tulaja-II** (1763-1787 A.D.)



No.9 **Serfoji-II** (1798-1832 A.D.)  
and  
**Sivaji-II** (1832-1855 A.D.)

meritorious works, was held in high esteem by the King. We come to know that this dance drama was regularly enacted in the Tiruvarur and Tiruvaiyar temples during its annual festivals. There were several other luminaries attached to his court who were highly proficient in Sanskrit, Marathi and Telugu. **Trayambakarāyamakhi** his able minister had written 'Dharmakutam' a rare commentary on Ramayana as a **Dharma Sāstra**<sup>(1)</sup>. This work gives a clear insight into the various activities of Sahaji as well as his literary accomplishments.

Apart from the contribution of his court poets, Sahaji himself was one of the outstanding royal composers and musicologist of high repute. His profound scholarship in the field of music is patent from his work on the science of music known as 'Sahaji Rāga Laksanamu'<sup>(2)</sup> which deals with the theory of rare ragas and observes the significance of it in relation to its practical aspects which in turn helps in developing clear insights about the then existing ragas.

Sahaji's mastery over several languages such as Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit, Marathi and Hindi can be assessed from the bulk of his literary and artistic works such as **Pallakisevā** Prabandha, Tyagaraja Vinoda Citra Prabandha, **Candraśekhara** Vilasa nataka and **Pañcabhāṣā** Vilasa nataka. The last mentioned work is a geya nataka composed in five languages proves Sahaji not only as a multilinguist but his profound knowledge from the literary standpoint. His 'Pancaratra Prabandha' bears ample testimony to his prowess in authoring prabandha type of literature and several darus and padas appearing in his prabandhas also serve as an evidence to the King's unsurpassed skill, scholarship in the realm of

(1) K R Subramanian- 'The Maratha Rajas of Tanjore'-1928-P. 18

(2) Dr. S. Seetha - Ed.. Rāga Laksanamu of Śāha Mahārāja; Brhaddhvani Publications, Madras - 1990.

dance. His works written in chaste Telugu are remarkable for its eloquence in style and expression.

Being a Maratha King, Sahaji's vivification of the Telugu language which was the popular tongue and court language of the preceding Nayak dynasty, seems to be a magnanimous act. It is due to the result of his unbiased nature that we find very rich output of fine Telugu literature during his reign. Eminent scholars in Telugu, Sanskrit, and Tamal like Girirajakavi, Somakavi, Vasudevakavi and Rāmabhārati ornamented his court.

Sahaji's unique productions include several beautiful padas in praise of his personal God Lord Tyagesa, that the presiding deity of Tiruvapur temple. It was due to his undying devotion to Lord Tyagesa, that the Maratha Durbar Hall at Thanjavur built by this scholar King, was named as Sivasowdāh<sup>(1)</sup> and convincingly we find most of his compositions signed with the mudra Tyagesa and the others with Svanamamudra. Nearly 208<sup>(2)</sup> padas have been written melliflously in Sanskrit, Marathi and Telugu which focus on myriad themes such as Bhakti, Śṛṅgāra, Hāsyā, Vairagya, Bhava, Maṅgaḷa and Niti. All the padas are generally termed as Tyagesa padas. There are several maṇipravāla padas too to his credit. Each and every pada without an exception with its captivating ragas, not only makes a perfect blend of the music and the thematic content but also creates an urge among dancers to portray the varied emotions and sentiments and to manifest the different states or avasthas of the Nāyaki and the Nāyaka. All such padas and darus testify the King's

(1) Interview with Prince P. Tulajendra Raja Saheb (the descendant of Raja Serfoji-II and life member of Thanjavur Sarasvati Mahal Library), dated 25-4-94, at Thanjavur Palace.

(2) Marathi Amanath Bundle D.852 and Descriptive catalogue (Des.Cat) of Telugu Manuscripts - 853-T.M.S.S.M. Library

proper moorings in the art of expressive dance. Several astapadis written by unknown authors of his period have been ascribed to Sahaji. These astapadis have been written based on the structure of Jayadeva's Gita Govinda<sup>(1)</sup>. Further, the royal author had written several compositions and natakas eulogising other deities of the Hindu pantheon. Radhā Bhamsidhar Vilasa nataka, Sri Kṛṣṇa vilāsa nātakamu and Sita" Kalyanam are few examples to cite. He was the first royal composer of several musical plays in Marathi at Tanjore. Though these musical plays resemble yaksaganas in its aspects of composition, several such works of the court poets including that of royalty had become extremely popular owing to its literary merit during Maratha rule. All these works have been preserved in the archives of T.M.S.S.M.\* Library. Many of his contemporary poets and learned pandits of his court had extolled Sāhaji in their padas and other works, for his intellectual attainments as an ingenious composer, musicologist and not the least munificent patron. Girirāja Kavi had written many Śṛṅgāra padas<sup>(2)</sup> in praise of his patrons Sāhaji and Śarabhoji-I. Sahaji had been hailed by the votaries of art as 'Abhinavabhōja'<sup>(3)</sup> or Bhoja of the 18th century Tanjore as he was a good judge of scholarship and was conferred many such titles which include "Sarvajna Cudāmani<sup>(4)</sup>" praising him as the heart and soul of the muse of learning. It was during Sāhaji's reign that many Marathi Saint poets from North inaugurated the bhajana and Kirtana paddhati and the art of 'Harikathā Kālākṣēpa' in the South and established several

(1) D. 10959. Des Cat of Sanskrit MSS. T.M.S.S.M. Library

\* Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahāl Library(TMSSML)

(2) Marathi Amanath Bundlc Vahi No.605, D.854.

(3) K R Subramanian - 'The Mnrratha Raias of Tanjore' - P.33

(4) P. Tulajendra Raja Bonste - 'Raia Serfoji-II an authentic biography' - Part.I, Thiruvalluvar Achagam - Thanjavur - 1990 - P.25.

mutts at Tanjore. Hence, it would not be exaggerating to say that Thanjavur became a culturally multilingual area during the distinguished rule of the Marathas.

Sahaji died at a very young age of 40 leaving no heir to the throne. Hence he was succeeded by his brother **Serfoji-I** alias **Sarabhoji-I**.

**Sarabhoji-I (A.D.1712-1728)**:- Like his illustrious brother **Sāhaji-II**, Sarabhoji-I also extended tangible amount of patronage to art and literature. Contemporary records represent him as pious and benignant person. He is said to have endowed Brahmins with aghaharams such as **Mangamatam**<sup>(1)</sup> in Tiruvenkādu and another at Tirukkadaiyūr, which was rightly named after him as 'Sarabhoji **rājapuram**'<sup>(2)</sup>. Many great scholars and ministers such as Girirajakavi and the able minister Anandarayamakhi who had adorned his brother **Sāhaji-II**'s court continued under the same status in his reign too. Girirajakavi, the celebrated poet is said to have penned the famous yaksagana '**Lilāvati Kalvanamu**'<sup>(3)</sup> which pertains to the marriage of Lilāvati with Sarabhoji-I. Girirajakavi was the inventor of new ragas such as Sarabharaja candrika, Sarabha lalita, Sarabha **Kalpam** and so on, which were named after his patron King Sarabhoji-I. From the Sanskrit manuscript '**Sarabhoji Caritra**'<sup>(4)</sup>, a panegyric on Sarabhoji-I, we infer that the King had good warship qualities as he saved the **Kāvēri** dam from its destruction at the hands of Madura King. Like his learned brother, Sarabhoji-I was also a distinguished scholar and was

(1) K.R. Subramanian-'**The Maratha Raia of Tanjore**'-P.39

(2) Ibid

(3) B.No. 587 - Descat of Telugu manuscripts

(4) Cf.K.R.Subramanian - Op.cit., P.38

hailed as **Vidyābhōja**<sup>(1)</sup>. Several padas in honour of **Sarabhoji-I** by his court poets have been set to Hindustani **rāgas**<sup>(2)</sup> such as Jogiasaveri, Brindavani and Bilaval, which reveal the prevalence of Hindustani music, with the regnant South Indian music. “**Vidyā Parinaya Nāṭaka**”<sup>(3)</sup>, an allegorical play written by an eminent court poet Vedakavi, had been ascribed to Anandarayamakhi, Minister and Counsellor to Sarabhoji. This play deals with the marriage of individual soul with vidya or the eternal wisdom. It is learnt that the play was regularly enacted during the festival of the Goddess of Anandavalli at Tanjore.

Sarabharajavilasa and Ratimanmatha nataka were from the pen of yet another famous poet Jagannatha, son of a Minister to **Ekoji-I**. The former is a record of the history and life achievements of the King. These poets have hailed their patron **Serfoji-I** as 'Sahitya Bhoja'. Sarabhoji-I died in the year 1728 without a progeny. Hence his brother **Tukkoji** alias **Tulaja-I** ascended the throne.

**Tulaja-I (1728-1736)**:- Tulaja is popularly known as the author of ‘**Sāṅgita Saramṛta**’<sup>(4)</sup> - an outstanding treatise on the theory and practice of music. It has been a customary practice for several musical treatises such as Sangita Ratnakara, ‘Sāṅgita Darpaṇa’ etc. in giving a definite treatment of dance incorporated in it. Tulaja's Sangita Sārāmṛta stands no exception to such a practice, as it has the valuable addition of a dance chapter called 'Nṛtprakaranam'.

(1) **Dr.S.Scetha-** *Tanjore as a seal of music*:University of Madras-1981; - P.86

(2) Marathi **Amanathvahi** 605 C. Marathi D 2608;- Descat of Telugu MSS -D 854,855,756: T.S.S.M. Library

(3) Descatalogue of Sk.Mss Vol-I, No. 12682-T.S.S.M.Library

(4) **S.Subrahmanya Sastri-Ed.**, *The Sāṅgita Sārāmṛta of King Tulaja of Tanjore* -The Music Academy Publication, Madras -1942

Apart from the description of the subjects such as Natyamandapa Laksanam, **Sabhānāyaka** Laksanam, **Pātraguṇa** and so on, the remarkable and highly productive contribution of the treatise is that it has a valuable section apportioned to the practice of the dance called '**Srama Vidhi**'. It gives the Tamil and Telugu equivalents to the Sanskrit names of the different categories of dance units or adavus. Such a codification of the dance units of Sadir dance well matching with the oral dance tradition for the first time in a scientific treatise seems to be a significant contribution of **Tulaja-I** to Sadir dance. "This makes the text unique since here one finds a systematic textual correlation of the Nautch\*\* which shows the fact that this tradition again does not stand aloof and that its vernacular terminology does not alienise it or make it a textless-**novelty**'<sup>(1)</sup> In the Svara chapter of this treatise, the author gives the description of a **vinā** under the heading Tulajendra Vina **Prasamsa**<sup>(2)</sup> and names the instrument as Tulajendra **Vinā**<sup>(3)</sup>.

**Yasyam** melakriyayasavisesoapi **nahaśyate** |  
**seyam** Tulajarājendravinēti parikirtita ||  
 Srutivinadayo yatra **linah** syuh **tatphalāptitah** |  
**seyam**——||

From this we get a quick reflection of the 24 fretted **Raghunātha** melavina which was named after the Nayak King **Raghunātha** who was not only a proficient vina Player but gave definite treatment regarding the technique of playing the **vinā** in most of his works.

\*\* Nautch is the Hindustani term meaning dance which was popularly used in English language. Sadir was also called as 'Tanjore-Nautch' during 19th century A.D.

- (1) Dr. V. Rāghavan-Introduction -' The Saṅgita Saramrta of King Tulaia of Tanjore -The Music Academy, Madras-1942; P.23
- (2) Saṅgita Saramrta - Svara Chapter - P. 19
- (3) **Ibid - P.19 - Verse-1.**

Needless to mention that Tulaja-I was not only a musicologist of outstanding merit, but was also an ingenious composer of fine yaksaganas. The capaciousness with which he composed the yaksaganas 'Sivakāmasundari Parinava nātaka'<sup>(1)</sup> and 'Rāja rañjana Vidya Vilasa Nātaka'<sup>(2)</sup> proves his expertise and adroitness in the field of dance too. It was the usual practice of the then poets and composers to deal with mythological themes in their compositions and more so for dance-dramas. Presumably King Tulaja too has followed the same lines for his yaksgana in Telugu 'Sivakāma Sundari Parinava nātaka' which celebrates the wedding of Lord Siva with Parvati. Here the King must have selected this lofty theme, intending to glorify the divine deeds of Lord Siva.

It is learnt that Tulaja wrote these two yaksaganas during his stay at Mahadeva Pattanam in Mannargudi taluk, as there is a vivid description of the place in the former yakṣagāna which further establishes this fact.

Another special feature of the place is that the idol of Adivarahasvamy was installed by Tulaja. It is further inferred from Sivakama Sundari Parinava Nataka that it was first enacted in Adivarahasvamy temple. This is evident from this verse<sup>(3)</sup> -

Bhosala Tulajendra purnacandrundu  
bhāvimpa paramesa bhaktuduttamudu  
devunipera susthira mahadeva  
pattanam-bamita sampadala nirmincidittayai-yandu  
pratistha gavinci; yādivarāhuni—

In this nataka we find the reference to Tulaja paying respects to his revered parents Ekoji and Dipamba and also addressing his eldest brother

(1) Or. S. Seetha-Ed., Sivakama Sundari Parinava Natakamu - T.S.M. Senes No.138-1971

(2) Marathi Amanath Bundle-D.No.836- T.M.S.S.M. Library.

(3) Sivakāmasundari Parinava riataka , P.22



**Sāhaji-II** as Navina bhōja and refers him as the incarnation of Lord Tyāgeśa of Tiruvarur, the family deity of the Maratha rulers.

Vidyasu, hrdayasu, manōjña gadya-padyesu sarvesu **Navinabhōjam**  
**adyam satam** Nitimatām Nṛpanām - Tyāgeśa rupam Sahabhupa  
rnide."

In **Saṅgita Saramrta**, too we find the reference to Tulaja eulogising his brother as 'Sangita Tantra **Priya**'<sup>(2)</sup> or the lover of the art and science of music.

This yaksagina written **mellifluously** in such a flowery Telugu language interspersed with scholarly darus facilitates in invoking a visual portrayal of the emotional content of the theme in the minds of the reader as it strikes a perfect balance of the lyric and the music (Dharumatu Samanvaya) which has proved King Tulaja as a sagacious playwright par excellence. 'Rājarañjana vidyāvilasa' nātaka is an allegorical play based on the philosophical concept of the individual soul merging with the supreme by conquering the six enemies of Jiva such as **Kama**(Lust), **artha**(money), Krodha(anger), moha(infatuation), **Lobha** (miserliness) and **mada** (intoxication).

This play enunciates the advaitic doctrine. A unique feature of this play is that the names of the ragas are well matched with the character appearing in the darus, highlighting the contextual appropriateness. For example the character Moha is portrayed by daru set to **Mōhana** raga. likewise Joy is depicted with Anandabhairavi raga and so on. This proves his power of expedience in the selection of the ragas to aptly portray the import of the darus.

(1) Sivakama Sundari Parinava nataka - P.4 - SL-7

(2) Saṅgita Sāramrta; Ch.1 - P-2, Verse-13

Apart from these productions, King Tulaja has several padas in Sanskrit, Marathi and Telugu to his credit. These compositions are catalogued in the Marathi MSS Vahi 61 MS No.2066(Marathi catalogue Vol-III). One such song mentioned is a **Khayāl**, Hindustani musical form in Sanskrit set to **Sankarābharanam** raga, in praise of Lord Siva. The introductory lines are as follows :

Dhanyoham Sadasivam **Dhanyoham**.....

Mahadeva Tulajendra **pūjita**.....

Undoubtedly, **Tulaja-I** like his brother **Sāhaji-II**, occupies a distinctive place among the galaxy of outstanding royal musicologists. Another noteworthy feature of Tulaja is that he had sound knowledge in other faculties of learning too and was an authority in different fields such as Jyotisa. Ayurveda, Dharmasastra and Politics.

Several versatile works on these subjects only speak of the scholar King's **multifaceted** personality.

Some of his works are as follows :

1. Dhanvantari vilasa - A work on medicine MS No-110669.
2. Dhanvantari **Saranidhi**-A work on medicine MS No. 110692-72
3. Inakula rajatejonidhi - A work on Jyotisha - MS No. 113236
4. **Dharma Sārasaṅgraha** - Treatise on **dharma** sastra MS No. 18759-2

Prominent among the court poets of King Tulaja-I were Ghanasyama Pundita and Manabhatta. The former had sound scholarship in Sanskrit and is said to have authored a **commentary**<sup>(1)</sup> on the 'Uttara Ramacaritra' of Bhavabhuti. He was also the author of an allegorical drama '**Navagraha Caritra**'<sup>(2)</sup> written after the model of **Yakṣagāṇa**. In total he is said to have authored 64 works.

(1) K.R. Subramanian- '**The Maratha Rasis of Tanjore** - 1928 - P.41.

(2) D.4689, Des Cat of Sanskrit MS - T.M.S.S.M. Library.

Manabhatta was reputed for his collection of numerous works of literature and maintaining a good library during Tulaja's reign.

Hence it can be said that Tulaja followed the footsteps of his brothers Sahaji-II and Sarabhoji-I in maintaining the cultural vibrancy of Thanjavur with utmost care.

Ekoji-II:-(1736-1737) Next successor of the Maratha dynasty was Ekoji-II alias **Bāva** Saheb, the eldest son of Tulaja who was 40 years old at the time of his accession to the throne. During Ekoji's one year of rule, Thanjavur was politically plagued by a series of setbacks consequent upon the internal dispute among the pretenders to the throne. Even under such chaotic conditions and inquietude situation, Ekoji-II kept the cultural fragrance of Tanjore afresh. Like his predecessors, he was also a liberal patron and his court was ornamented with a highly accomplished danseuse **Muddumaṅga**, who, we learn, made her audiences spell bound with her extraordinary histrionic talents. She was adept in varieties of **dances**<sup>(1)</sup> such as 'Jakkini', 'Padacāli' and 'Tullal' and more so with her captivating abhinaya elicited the accolades of not only the King but every rasika who witnessed her dance. Highly impressed by her talents and scholarship in the art of dancing, Ekoji presented her with a pearl necklace for every performance as a token of appreciation.

Anucu Ekojibhupālundu anudinamu mecci mutyālakucchu  
nikicchu **sabhanu**<sup>(2)</sup>

He was not only a connoisseur of art but himself a royal artiste of merit. Like his learned father, Ekoji too had a good command over several languages such as Sanskrit, Marathi and Telugu. There are several works and padas to his credit. 'Tvāgeśvara Kamalāmbā parinava nātakam' is one

(1) Cf. Dr.S.Scetha, 'Tanjore as a Seal of Music' -University of Madras; 1981 -P.96

(2) **Ibid**

such work which he is said to have dedicated to his personal God Lord Candramouliśvara. 'Vignesvara Kalyaṇam' centres round the theme of divine marriage of Siddhi & Buddhi with Lord Ganapati. Ekoji was a fine composer of lovely padas. There are in total 86 padas on different themes such as Śṛṅgāra, Niti and Bhakti, written in Telugu, Marathi and Sanskrit with the authorship of Ekoji. These padas have been listed in the Telugu MS D. No.850 & 851 under the heading 'Ekoji Sāhityamu'.

Like many of his predecessors, he too did not beget a son and his intense desire for a progeny is echoed in most of his padas which are in praise of all most every deity of the Hindu pantheon.

Ekoji-II died just after one year of rule and he was succeeded by his brave and heroic queen Sujanaboi who ruled for one year.

Pratapasimha(1739-1763):-He was born to the sword wife of Tukkoji-I and was enthroned in the year 1739 A.D. Tradition represents him as the most brave, intelligent and a man of iron will. It was he who saved Thanjavur which was plagued by the selfish policies of the fake pretenders to the throne by removing the anomaly and disarray prevailing within the place.

He encouraged Sanskrit. Marathi. Telugu and Tamil languages and had several learned men and composers in his court, prominent among them being Melattur 'Virabhadravva', a person with high fecundity who designed the blue print of several prolific svarajatis and sallamdarus eulogising his patron. Several sallamdarus were composed by his court poets in praise of Pratapasimha. A part of the Sallamdaru in praise of Raja Pratapasimha is as follows:-

Rajasri Bhosalakulacandra, Ratipati Sundara rājanarendra,  
Raja Tulaja Maharaja tanuja Pratapasimha Sutrāma Sallām

Some of his other court poets were -

1. Jagannath Balakrsna, the author of *Gyañeś'vari* Tippan
2. *Trayambaka* bhatt - author of *Kalidharma* prasamsa
3. Mahadevasuta - author of *Kalividambana*

**Rāmanātha**, was the author of *Prahlada Caritra*. *Pratapa Simha Vijaya* written by Ramakrsna Kavi deals with the defeat of Dost Ali Khan by Pratapasimha. His court was ornamented with another jewel, by name Muddupalani, a famous dancer and authoress of *Radhika Santvanamu*, an erotic work, dedicated to her patron.

**Pratāpasimha** was himself a distinguished scholar in Marathi. His brilliant contribution to Marathi literature is significant. There was abundance of Marathi works during his period. *Kṛṣṇamañjari* based on Bhagavata, *Rāmadinacarya*, a Kavya of outstanding merit dealing with the daily routine of Lord Rama, *Madanasanjivani* (a work on sexology) and *Umā Saṁhita* are some of his best works in Marathi.<sup>(1)</sup> Supplementing to this are 12 dramas written in Marathi based on *purāṇic* themes.

Pratapasimha died in the year 1763 at the time when the English dominance over India was increasingly felt which gradually paved way for the downfall of Thanjavur. It was during such a struggled period that Tulaja-II (A.D. 1763-1787), son of Pratapasimha took to power. With the continuance of the internal hostility among native rulers, the situation of political instability was well exploited by the East India Company, who ultimately succeeded in grabbing the political as well as military powers, reducing the kings to titular rulers. In spite of the prevalence of such a pathetic situation, there was no dearth of the royal patronage to fine arts. There are several documentary evidences which are indicative of Tulaja-II's liberality and his love and admiration for art and literature.

(1) Sri A. Krishnaswāmy Mahadick Rao Sahab - Compiler & Editor- Loka Geet - T.S.M Series No. 17- 1950 - P.6

Tulaja-II, received scholastic education from his learned father and was considered as a great linguist of his time. His sound scholarship in Sanskrit language can be best evidenced from the words of Rev.Schwartz a Danish missionary, and a close friend of Tulaja-II. To quote "Raja successfully cultivated Sanskrit literature so as to have even produced some poetic compositions in that language which are still recited at Tanjore as proof of his genius and learning"<sup>(1)</sup>.

King Tulaja patronised several Marathi, Sanskrit and Telugu poets. One such Telugu poet by name Alluri Kuppanna, the author of 'Acarya Vijayamu'<sup>(2)</sup> and such other classics was rightly conferred with the title 'Andhra Kālīdāsa'<sup>(3)</sup> by his worthy patron Tulaja-II. Acarya Vijayamu is the translated work of Anandagiri's Sankara Vijaya which deals with the achievements of Śrī Adi Sankarācārya. The period of Tulaja and his son Serfoji-II was an august age of Karnatic music, as the musical Trinity - Sri Tyagaraja, Sri Syama Sastri and Sri Muttusvāmi Dikshitar, lived during the period and contributed magnanimously to the Laksana and Lakṣya of Karnatic music with their divine compositions.

Sonti Vehkataramanayya, the esteemed guru of Sri Tyagaraja and Vina Kalahastayya were expert musicians of Tulaja's time. It is learnt that Sonti Venkatarāmanayya was given the Ardha Simhāsana<sup>(4)</sup> by King Tulaja on every New Year's Day, a rare honour in appreciation of his musical talents. Paccimiriya Adiyappaiah, composer of the famous Tāna

- (1) Hugh Pearson - Memoirs of Schwartz, Vol.1 - 1834 - P.201.
- (2) P. Tulajendra Raja Bonsle - Raja Serfoji-II - An Authentic Biography - Thanjavur -1990 - P.38.
- (3) Ibid
- (4) K.K. Ramaswāmy Bhagavatār - 'Sri Tyagaraja Brāhmōpanishad' - P. 15- Cf. Dr.S. Seetha - 'Tanjore as a Seat of Music' - University of Madras-1981-P. 102

varna in Ata **tāla**, 'Viriboni' in Bhairavi raga, ornamented his court. He was an expert vainika too. Among his notable disciples were **Syāmā Sastri**, Pallavi **Gopālayya**.

Like his predecessors, **Tulaja**, gifted 30 **velis** of land as **Srotriyam\*** to 11 people. The area given as endowment was named as **TulajaMaharajapuram**. Similar gift of 1 1/2 **velis** of wet land and 1 1/2 **velis** of dry lands, were given to **Adimūrthy**, a **Bhagavatamela artiste**<sup>(1)</sup>. In addition, he had also donated dry land to four **Srotriyam** people. The area endowed was named as **Hariharapuram**<sup>(2)</sup>.

In the realm of dance, eminent **natyacaryas** such as **Mahādeva Annavi**, **Subbarava Oduvār-father** of the illustrious **Tanjore Quartette - Cinnayya**, **Ponnayya**, **Sivanandam** and **Vadivelu**, were given an honoured place in the galaxy of his court musicians.

**Bhagavata mēla nātakas** received full patronage at the hands of King **Tulaja** and his son **Serfoji-II**. Separate **Bhagavata mēla** troupes were attached to the court. The expenditure incurred for the maintenance of these artists were met from the royal treasury. In spite of the inquietude situation in the political scenario, the King's bountiful patronage to art and literature deserves approbation. As ill-luck would have it, King **Tulaja's** two sons predeceased him at a very young age and was left with no heir to the throne, hence he proposed to take in adoption an eligible boy from a collateral branch of **Bhonsle** dynasty, days before his death. On **22-12-1787**, King **Tulaja** adopted 10 year old boy whom he christened as **Serfoji-II**. The boy(born in the year **24-9-1777**) was

- **Srotriva** means a person learned in the **vedas**, conversant with sacred **knowledge**. but maratha kings also donated such lands to **meritorious** musicians and able administrators.

(1) **Sarasvati Mahāl** Modi Tamil (S.M.M.T.) translation - MS 20 - P.4

(2) **S.M.M.T. - MS 2 - P.4** (1777)

the son of Sahaji, a descendant of Bhonsle dynasty, whose family was in the protection of Tulaja and his father **Pratāpasimha**.

Since Serfoji was too young to administer the country, Tulaja's dying wish was to appoint his step brother **Rāmasvāmy** alias **Amarasimha**, who was the son of a concubine of Pratapasimha as regent and guardian till Serfoji attained age to govern the kingdom.

But **Tulaja-II** had his own apprehensions regarding **Amarasimha's** loyalty and hence requested his dear friend Bishop Schwartz to look after the safety and well being of his adopted son Serfoji-II. Hence Serfoji-II, as desired by Tulaja was entrusted in the protecting care of Rev Schwartz. Amarasimha who ruled from 1787-1798, was equally a good patron of art and literature. Several musicians and poets of repute were said to have adorned his court. But as anticipated by Tulaja, Amarasimha had **malefide** intentions and was no longer wanting to remain as mere defacto ruler. He was keen on bringing about the liquidation of Serfoji-II. In order to usurp the throne, he even entered into treaty twice with the East India Company. As a result on 6-8-1788 with the help of the then Governor Archibald Campbell he ascended the throne. It is learnt from the contemporary records that Amarasimha, in the capacity of a King resorted to every possible method to eliminate Serfoji. This resulted in the ill-treatment of not only the young Serfoji. but also the widows of late Raja and other royal ladies who refused to accept Amarasimha as the legitimate heir to the throne. As repugnance and animosity towards Serfoji became unbearable, Rev.Schwartz anticipating threat to the lives of Serfoji and his mothers, requested the then Governor to transfer them to Madras for safety. Meanwhile, this Danish missionary strived no less a measure to restore Serfoji to power by convincing the English of the



rightful claim of his ward to the throne. Corroborating to this, the East India Company took serious umbrage at Amarasimha who dishonoured the implementation of the two treaties he entered with the British and as a result a proclamation was issued deposing Amara Simha and placing Serfoji on the throne of Thanjavur on 30th June, 1798.

Serfoji like Amarsimha entered into a treaty with the East India Company on 25th October, 1799 after his accession to throne. By this treaty, the King was to receive annually a sum of one lakh pagodas (3-1/2 lakh company's rupees) and one fifth of the net revenue of the state; and retaining the governance of only the Fort of Thanjavur and certain areas around the Fort. Though deprived of the onerous duties of a sole ruler, King Serfoji-II effected the overall development of Thanjavur, especially in the artistic and literary fields.

Hence under the stewardship of King Serfoji-II, Thanjavur made an epoch making history in the field of music, dance and literature.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:-

With an overview of the cultural history of Tanjore given above, the present study 'Development of Sadir in the court of Raja Serfoji-II (1798-1832) of Tanjore', proposes an attempt to bringforth a comprehensive, penetrating analysis of the developmental trends which the art form witnessed, unfolding certain important aspects such as technique, themes-modes and presentational aspects of Sadir, its repertoire and such other allied aspects. This would indeed facilitate in creating an awareness regarding the status enjoyed by Sadir as well as other arts such as **Kuravaññi**, Bhagavatamelanatakas and thesaurus of various dances prevalent

and encouraged in the court and not the least the royal contribution to the cause of Sadir in the right perspective. The contribution of King Serfoji-II to the development of Sadir is inestimable. His erudite scholarship in the science of music and dance is evident from his Nirupanas-Natyaprabandha which include in itself several dance numbers of Sadir-attam repertoire that were popularly performed by the accomplished danseuses of his court. Written in Marathi, Nirupanas reveal a high degree of co-ordination and perfect synthesis of Marathi language and Karnatic music and therefore can be considered as the mile-stone in the growth and development of the theory and practice of Sadir.

The court was remarkable for the confluence of musicians, composers, dancers and most importantly the great dance teachers who developed a methodology in teaching the art, systematised its format and produced prolific output of dance musical compositions which enriched the repertoire of Sadir and facilitated in accentuating a definite standard of excellence. Many of the dance compositions which even now enjoy great popularity in Bharatanatyam recitals, can be ascribed to the galaxy of great composers, nattuvanars who adorned the court of King Serfoji-II.

Hence, the period of Serfoji-II of Tanjore may be described as the golden age in the development of Sadir and marked as the most innovative and distinguished in the annals of Bharatanatyam. In order to have an adequate understanding, in widening the depth and profundity of the knowledge, better awareness and appreciation of the nuances of the art of Bharatanatyam, there is an imperative need to probe into the study of its historical developments.

This has inspired and motivated the research scholar, with a felt need to study the development of Sadir in the court of King **Serfoji-II**, as this art had and is still receiving many accolades from one and all.

#### THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:-

1. To make an indepth study of the materials that have bearing on the history and development of Sadir in the court of King Serfoji-II (1798-1832).
2. To have a critical appraisal of the then dance-Sadir, with reference to the **technical** aspects of dance (Nrta, Nrtya and Abhinaya).
3. To identify the dance production of the royal and court composers with special reference to the following items :-
  - (a) Performances of music, dance and dance-dramas in the palace and the artists who participated in the recitals.
  - (b) Description of the **auditorium - Sangitamahāl, Sadirmādi and Maratha Durbar hall**; the instruments used for the dance **recitals**, emoluments paid to the artists; the type of costume adorned by the dancers and other details regarding the rules and norms to be followed by the court dancers as well as the nattuvans or dance teachers.
4. The study presumably will try to throw light on the dance - musical forms that have become obsolete today. A few dance compositions of King Serfoji and his court composers have been choreographed as this will prove to be a valuable addition to the present **Bharatanatyam** repertoire.

### SCOPE OF THE STUDY:-

As innumerable musicians ornamented the court of King Serfoji-II and since some of their compositions lean heavily on the musical side, the present attempt which is a definitive study of the development of Sadir, focuses on the contribution of court composers pertaining to Sadir dance alone. Such an approach facilitates in realising the objectives of the study. Since King Serfoji-II and his son Sivaji-II were the last rulers of the Maratha dynasty, the study also covers the consequences of the decline of royal patronage to Sadir and the causative factors of rechristening Sadir as Bharatanatyam and also discusses its present scenario.

## CHAPTER II

### **RAJA SERFOJI - II AND HIS PATRONAGE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART.**

Needless to mention that the growth of an art does not take place in vacuum and every art to evolve, enrich and establish itself and a place to become a seat of such an art should have the privilege of three essential factors **namely:-**

- 1) A cultured society
- 2) An irrepressible desire and urge among the artists with excellence to give their best and
- 3) An unstinted and bountiful patronage by the governing forces.

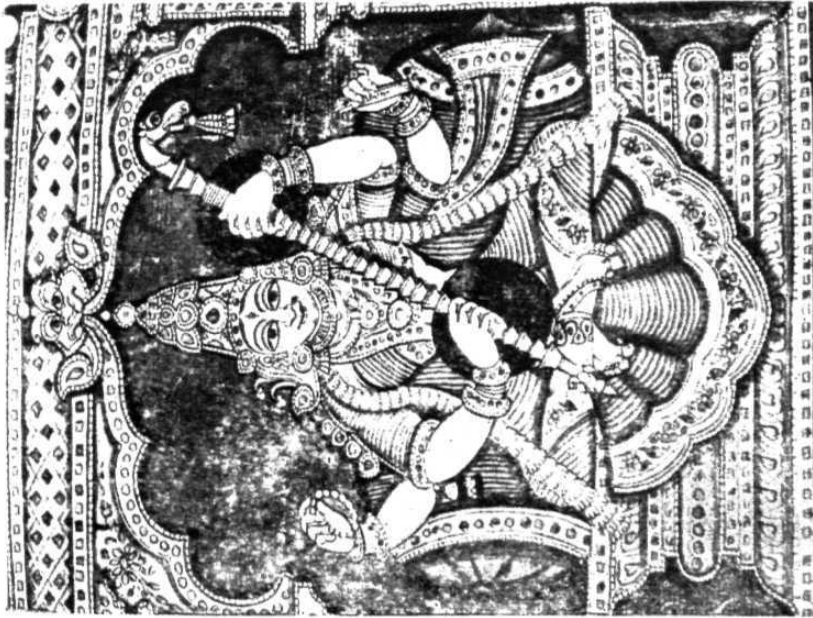
The above mentioned aspects are interdependent and complementary to each other and no factor can singularly function and motivate the artists to maximise their output.

Among the outstanding royal patrons of the Maratha rulers, the name of **Mahārāja Serfoji-II** remains unsurpassed as he occupies a significant place in the history and development of 'Sadir' dance, presently known as "Bharatanatyam". At a time of foreign invasion, despite limited powers and financial resources, his period witnessed a fresh impetus in its own way in socio-cultural and literary activities which was mainly spearheaded by King Serfoji-II. He was a great patron of art and literature and encouraged numerous scholars and poets of different branches of learning to maximise their outputs. Being himself an able scholar in almost all the disciplines, he is considered as a republic of letters by one and all. Indeed, he was a distinguished King endowed with such high privity and encyclopaedic knowledge in different subjects

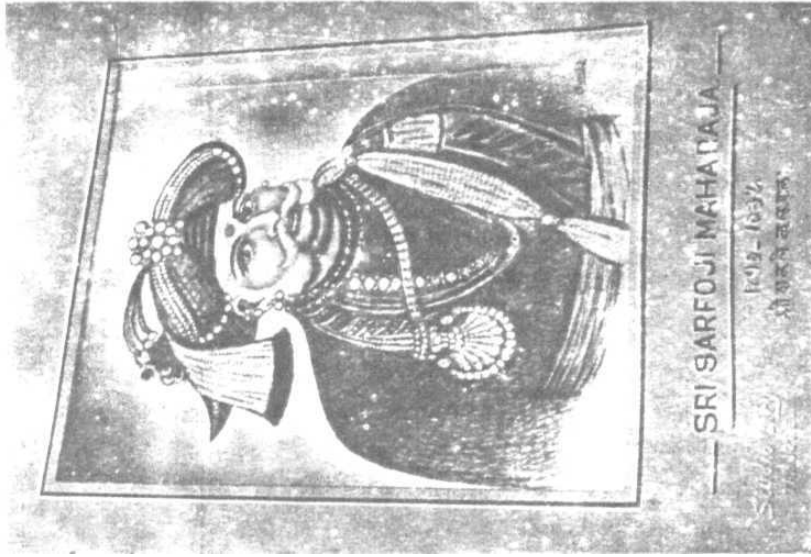
that he seems to have been truly blessed by the muse of learning. Apart from his erudition in different sciences, he was a multilinguist, an ingenious composer of many celebrated works and above all the architect of the internationally renowned library - a rich legacy left behind to posterity by **Serfoji-II**. This library carefully preserves not only the artistic and literary productions of his period but many such **fine** works flown from the pen of his predecessors right from the **period** of Nayak rulers, their court composers, and such other numerous treatises, meticulously collected by the scholar king **during** his reign. As a fitting tribute to this sovereign master, this temple of learning has been appropriately named after him as the "Thanjavur Maharaja **Serfoji's-Sarasvati Mahal Library**" (TMSSML). **Raja's** munificent patronage and profound scholarship in variegated fields issued out in myriad ways found its expression not **only** in the overall development of the Tanjore Kingdom but made its impeccable record and remarkable position, quite rewarding in the cultural map of India.

In this context, it is highly interesting to note that deprivation of power could no way stand as an impediment for King Serfoji-II in discharging his duties as a King but infact proved as a blessing in disguise in channelising his time and energies resourcefully in the pursuit of knowledge, promotion of arts and such other multifarious activities - most importantly his cherished desire for the preservation, extension, and enrichment of this monumental temple of muse.

The Sarasvati **Mahāl** Library:- Remarkably, this literary treasure-house of knowledge has in its proud possession, a richest collection of innumerable manuscripts of rare merit, bulk of valuable treatises and books pertaining to varied disciplines such as Music, Dance, Literature,



No.10 Goddess Sarasvati adorning  
the Sarasvati Mahal Library, Tanjavur.



— SRI SARFOJI MAHARAJA —

1819-1837

சிர் ஸர்ஓஜி மகாராஜா

No.11 Sri Sarfoji Maharaja-II

Grammar, Medicine, Ethics, Epics (Puranas, Itihasas), Astrology, Kamasastra, Yoga, Mathematics, Philosophy, Architecture etc, in different languages - Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil, Marathi, and Hindi.

"A major part of the manuscripts in this library is in Sanskrit language. A total number of nearly 37,000 manuscripts out of 44,000 belong to this language<sup>(1)</sup>".

Dr.A.C.Burnell, the then District sessions Judge who had prepared the catalogue of the Sanskrit manuscripts of this library described the collection of Sanskrit manuscripts as "It may perhaps be asked of the library is worth the labour spent on it. I can answer unhesitatingly that it is, it is now a recognised fact that nearly all Sanskrit works of importance exist in different recensions".<sup>(2)</sup> These works are in cudgeon leaves as well as on paper. The total number of manuscripts covering different languages are as follows<sup>01</sup>:-

Languages	Palmleaf	Paper	Total
1. Sanskrit	19,497	18,002	37,499
2. Tamil	3,341	-	3,341
3. Telugu	742	41	783
4. Marathi	-	3,062	3,062
5. Hindi		22	22
			44,707

(1) A. Pañchanathan - "Guide Book to Sarasvati Mahal", - T.S.M.Sencs. No.201, Thanjavur. 1993, P.5.

(2) Ibid P. 8

(3) Ibid



Details of Books collected<sup>(1)</sup>:-

1. Tamil	9,700
2. English	10,126
3. Sanskrit	11,733
4. Telugu	1,547
5. Marathi	2,175
6. Hindi	2,752
7. Others	978
	<hr/> 39,011 <hr/>

In this direction, the inscriptional evidence of the Cidambaram temple<sup>(2)</sup> is quite useful in unraveling the fact that several such libraries known as "Sarasvati Bhandāram" were in existence even during the period of cholas and Pandya kings. The rare books on literature, arts and sciences were preserved in temples and mutts. It is further learnt from these inscriptions that Svamidevar, the Raja Guru(royal teacher)to Rajaraja III (1220A.D) was instrumental in instituting a library called "Sarasvati-Bhandāra" and that it was further enlarged and strengthened by King Sundara Pāṇḍiyan-I (A.D.1263). This King is said to have appointed twenty members to attend to various activities in the library such as maintenance of the books, transcription of the old treatises and reading the contents of the cudgeon leaf manuscripts for the interested inquirers etc.

In addition to the voluminous collection at Sarasvatimahar library, there are 850 bundles of old records of the Maratha Kings written in Marathi

(1) A.Pāṇchanathan - Op.Cit. P.9.

(2) Cf.N. Sethurāman- 'Pāṇḍai Tamizhaga Noolagangal' - Mannar Sarabhoji-II's birth centenary celebration volume - T.M.S.S.M.Library- Thanjavur, 1989 - Pp .18-20

shorthand script called modiscript. Though the library dates back to the Nayak period (16th century), then known as "Sarasvati Bhandaram", the credentials of painstaking procurement, preservation and cataloguing of such mind boggling collection of worthy informative, educative literary material and the establishment of such repository, go to no less a person than the munificent king Serfoji-II who was a renowned literary man of his period. The King's yeoman service to the cause of knowledge is inexhaustible. It is to be remembered that most of the worthy collection of manuscripts, treatises and books by King Serfoji-II are inaccessible and unprocurable anywhere in the world and it is highly touching to learn that the King made such a voluminous collection possible by purchasing many such unique material, in return for his precious belongings. This serves as an indicative evidence of his bibliomania and love for learning. In most of the books collected by the King, one finds his **autograph**<sup>(1)</sup> and also his impressions and remarks on the marginal side of the **book**<sup>(2)</sup> which speak not only of his avid reading attitude, thorough understanding of subjects but also his enchantment and unsatiated thirst for knowledge.

The royal bibliophile had enriched the library with its remarkable collection and had thus enshrined the temple of learning for the ventilation of knowledge. Further, the royal museum situated within its precincts contains antique materials and artifacts which signify the richness of the bygone centuries and also serve as a rewarding experience for the general visitors. If Raja raja **Chola-I** is to be

- (1) Richard Burn - "The Justice of the Peace and Pansh Officer" - T.S.S.M. Library (year of acquisition - 1822), Cf. **Guide Book to Sarasvati Mahal**, Thanjavur.
- (2) Edmund Gibbon - "History of the Decline and Fall of Roman Empire" - Vol.V; published in 1788 - T.S.S.M. Library, Cf. **Guide Book to Sarasvati Mahāl**, Thanjavur.

acknowledged for the construction of such a beautiful monumental temple 'Brhadiś'varālaya', the supreme merit of the Maratha King Serfoji-II is the enrichment and development of the intellectual centre, the Sarasvati Mahal library.

Unquestionably, this intellectual edifice has been captivating the attention of not only the public in general but also offering perennial inspiration for specific inquirers and research scholars from different fields.

The 'Encyclopaedia Britannica' best describes the library as "perhaps the most remarkable library is that of the Raja of Thanjavur which dates from the end of the 16th century"<sup>01</sup>.

#### Serfoji-II - A multifaceted personality :-

Apart from being an adept in the oriental languages, the King had proficiency in foreign languages too such as French, German, Latin, Italian and English. Serfoji-II received his early education in English, Arithmetic and instruction in Bible from European scholars Rev. William Gerrick and the Christian missionary Rev.Schwartz. His interest for western learning was cultivated by these eminent teachers especially the latter in whose company and protecting care, Serfoji spent his childhood and who was instrumental in restoring the throne of Tanjore to his worthy student. It was Rev.Schwartz who appointed Dada Rao a pundit to impart knowledge to young Serfoji in indigenous subjects. At the sad demise of Rev.Schwa. ... on 13-2-1798, Serfoji-II out of esteem affection and gratitude for his guardian master erected a splendid monument with marble stone in the

(1) Cf.A. Pañchanathan - Guide Book to Sarasvati Mahal!; T.S.M. Series No.201.- Thanjavur - 1993 -P.2.

chapel at **Tanjore**<sup>(1)</sup>. A beautiful poetry in English was engraved on the marble stone by Serfoji as a tribute to his departed master. At a very early age, Serfoji was exposed to both the Eastern and Western cultures. Serfoji on the one hand guarding the indigenous culture, judiciously encapsulated all that was best in both the streams. Such a harmonious blending of both the cultures was mirrored in his administration much to the satisfaction and advantage of his people who were the **real** beneficiaries of such a composite culture.

Many foreign dignitaries and great men of learning who happened to visit the court of Raja **Serfoji-II** had showered high encomiums on this scholar king for his versatile talents and able administration.

Lord Valentia, who visited the East in 1803-1806, had spoken high of the Raja and made the following commendable compliment - "The Raja's manners are excellent and goodnature beams from his countenance. The facility and propriety with which he expressed himself in English was to me a great satisfaction. It was for the first time I had been able to converse with a native prince except through an **interpreter**"<sup>(2)</sup>. Bishop Herber, another British admirer of Serfoji-II, who visited Tanjore in 1826, said on his return "I have seen many crowned heads, but not one whose deportment was more princely" and addressing him as "deadly shot" extolled the king's proficiency in writing "very superior English **poetry**"<sup>(3)</sup>. Indeed the fact that East India Company held King Serfoji in very high esteem is best evidenced from his election

(1) Guide to the records of Tanjore - Vol V. (1749-1835)

(2) Cf.Tulajendra fcija **Sahab** - "The Maharaja Serfoji Scholar Pnnce"-The Journal of T.M.S.S.M. Library - **Thanjavur** - 1979 - Vol.30 - P.2.

(3) Ibid - PP.2-3

to the membership of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland in 1827, a rare honour conferred on a native prince as early as in the 19th century itself.

#### Rāja Serfoji's contribution to medicine:-

To Serfoji goes the credit for the encouragement of research in his medical institution called "Dhanvantari Mahal". He is said to have appointed many Siddha, Ayurvedic and Unani physicians of repute not only from India but from foreign countries also. The Institution also has a separate research department for Animal husbandry. Many drugs tested for their curative efficacy were the resultant features of the successful attempts of the discoveries and experimentation by these doctors. These have been recorded in a series of works in Tamil called "Sarabhendra Vaidhya Muraigal" (Serfoji's method of medical treatment).

#### Raja's contribution to Education and Technology:-

He is accredited for starting the first stone type granite printing press with Devanagari type in 1805 A.D. at Thanjavur. This small press known as "Navavidya Kalanidhi" which is still in Tanjore, printed the first edition of the book "Raghuvams'a" in Sanskrit. **The** main aim of the King in setting up the printing press was for the production of copies of all the great works in different Indian languages for its publication and circulation among his people, especially for the students studying in the schools established by him. This miniature University also called as "Navavidya Kalanidhi **Sala**" had several departments attached to it such as Arts, Philosophy, Astronomy, Fine Arts and Linguistics (Persian, Arabic, Telugu, Sanskrit, Marathi **and** English). This institution was mainly intended to impart knowledge free

of cost to the boys and girls of Tanjore. The avidity and zeal with which he worked hard for the spread of knowledge to the people of his kingdom especially the younger ones is really laudable. His Vedic school which taught Alankara **Sāstra** and **Purāṇic** subjects was open to all the children irrespective of the social strata they belonged to.

**Technology:-** An astounding, yet highly appreciable contribution to technology by Raja is the Ship building Industry which he started in 1814 at Saluvanayakan Pattinam which came to be later called as “**Sarabhendra Raja Pattinam**”<sup>(1)</sup> situated 10 miles south of Pudukkottai at the sea coast. The wonderful achievement of the ships built in this region paved the way for coastal trade not only in adjoining places like Nagapattinam, Kerala but also with distant lands like Colombo, Jaffna, Andamans and Lakshadweep. Several houses around the port were constructed for the settlement of the families of workers employed in the Industry. Apart from these activities Raja's keen interest in the art of painting is evidenced from his vast collection of paintings on mythological themes and lithographic pictures of human physiognomy drawn by Charles Le Brun, a physiognomist and an artist in the court of French King Louis XIV.

In addition to these, the one aspect which stands apart and rises above all his laudable activities is the establishment of several charitable institutions and endowments given to such institutions. There are several evidences that bear testimony to his generosity and kind heartedness which seem to be the nucleus of his very existence. Serfoji who was reduced to a nominal ruler with minimal monetary benefits, still was

(1) Modi manuscript No 2 - 102(1814) and Modi manuscript No.10 - 74(1822).

steadfast in his stupendous task of providing basic amenities to the people in the Chattrams instituted by himself and his ancestors.

Hence, for the proper maintenance of these Chattrams, Serfoji with all his nobility had made an earnest appeal to the British officers through a letter<sup>(1)</sup> which is indeed very disturbing and touching to any reader. Several such charitable institutions established and maintained by the King have been clearly mentioned in the letter which all in all glorify his nobility and munificence.

Serfoji-II's Sanskrit and Marathi works:- Holding on to the tradition bequeathed by his ancestors and predecessors - the Nayaks and the Cholas, Raja Serfoji no doubt was a liberal patron of fine arts and literature but was himself a pastmaster in different fields. Some of his celebrated Sanskrit works are as follows :-

1. Kumara Sambhava Tika<sup>(2)</sup> - This subject taken from the puranic lore, celebrates the birth of Lord Kumara or Subrahmanya. It is learnt from the manuscript that the present work was composed by Serfoji on 11th December 1812.
2. Mudrārāksasachaya<sup>(3)</sup> - a Nataka written in prakrit -
3. Smṛtisaṅgraha<sup>(4)</sup>
4. Smṛti Sārasamuccāya<sup>(5)</sup>

(1) Letter, dated 28th January, 1801, Chattram's Manual - Cf. Mannar Sārabhoji Avvukkuvai Vol.2 - Pp. 154-156.

(2) Des No.4030, BL No 4711

(3) Des No:-4473

(4) Des No. 18483, 18493

(5) Des No. 18499

The Marathi works of Serfoji-II are mostly based on mythology. Some of them are as follows :-

- (1) Ganes'a Lilarnava Nataka
- (2) Ganes'a Vijaya Nataka
- (3) **Gangā** Viśveś'vara Parinaya Nataka
- (4) Radha Kṛṣṇa Vilasa Nataka
- (5) Mohinī Mahēś'vara Parinaya Nataka
- (6) Śivarātri Upākhyāna Nataka
- (7) Nilakanta Kulālavara Caritra
- (8) Nīla Bhilla Caritra
- (9) Pakṣa Pradōṣha Sani pradōṣha
- (10) Devendra Kuravañji Nataka
- (11) Tristhali Yatrechya Lāvanyā
- (12) Sivarātri Katha

Music and Dance:- In addition to the works on dramatics, the King's contribution to music and dance is immeasurable. His erudite scholarship in science of music and dance is evident from several of his Nirupanas - 'Nāṭyaprabandha'<sup>(1)</sup> - written in Marathi which include in itself several dance numbers of the Sadir-attam repertoire, which were popularly performed by the accomplished dancers of his court.

Nirupana:- The musical forms such as Ovi, Abhang, Sakhi, Dindi, Nirupana etc. are of Marathi origin and were utilised profusely by the Kirtanakaras in Harikatha Kalaksepa. The term Nirupana refers to **Saṅgīta Upanyāsa**<sup>(2)</sup>. It is also generally understood as a song figuring

(1) Marathi Manuscript No.2591 - T.M.S.S.M. Library

(2) Interview with A.Krishnaswami Mahadick. great grandson of Rija Serfoji-II; dated 24-4-94 at Thanjavur Palace.



in the beginning of the story or katha, which gives a brief synopsis of the entire theme in a nutshell. However, there are two types of **Nirūpaṇa** compositions. The first type is based on the story conveyed through songs and prose passages and the other with the help of ślokaś and songs devoid of prose passages. Though the Nirupana production of Raja **Serfoji-II** can be listed under the second type, yet they have somewhat different connotation. The meaning of the term 'Nirupana', in the present context, is nothing but an elaboration or aggrandised narration of a single theme usually based on puranic or otherwise, with the help of 18 interesting dance numbers which facilitate in unfolding the thematic content through the three main components of dance - Nṛtta(pure dance), Nṛtya(Representational dance) and Abhinaya (Expressive dance). The unique feature of Serfoji-II's Nirupanas is that all the characters of the Nirupana were portrayed by a single danseuse and at times by two or more danseuses. This means that the practice of 'Solo' dancing which was prevalent then is still followed even to this day in Bharatanatyam. But one distinguishing feature of the format of **Nirūpaṇa** is that all its 18 items have been set to single raga and tāla of (the Kamatic saṅgita) South Indian Music. A study of these **Nirūpaṇas** reveals a high degree of co-ordination and perfect synthesis of Marathi language and Karnatic music. The lofty ambition of the King Serfoji in making such a synthesis of Marathi language and South Indian music was to -

- (1) inculcate right attitude towards the art developed in South India among the lovers of music and dance of the Maratha region;
- (2) making the art more interesting and understandable and create a deep appreciation for the art that was so laboriously practised and developed since ages at Tanjore ; and

(3) stimulating an extensive propagation of the beautiful art, thereby not making it the exclusive preserve of South India alone for its appreciation.

The text of Natyaprabhanda or Nirūpana compositions of Raja Serfoji-II have been incorporated in the text 'Kōrvayāñche Sahityache Jinnas'<sup>(1)</sup>. The term 'Kōrvai' is a Tamil word meaning chain and in the present context means a string of Nirupanas each of which has an interlinking of 18 varied dance numbers, in a sequential order for the amplification and exposition of the theme and import of the Nirupana.

The Nirupanas written by Raja Serfoji are as follows:-

- (1) Uma Mahesvara Parinaya in **raga** Ritigoula.
- (2) Kumara Sambhava Nirupana in Bilahari raga.
- (3) Kiratarjuniya Nirupana in Kedara Gowla **rāga**.
- (4) Mahādevāce agaman Sakhine Pārvatisē Parihāsa-pūrvaka janate Karanyāci Kalpita Khatha in Bhairavi raga.
- (5) Virahinikṛta manmathōpālambha Kalpita Katha in Kalyani raga.
- (6) Virapatni Samvād in Hussaini raga.
- (7) Nirguna Svanubhav pratipādana purvaka saguṇapar upadesa in Nilambari raga.
- (8) Pārvatyōpākhyāna Nirupana in Yadukulakāmbhōji raga.
- (9) Saripataca Dava Kalpita Katha in Purvikalyāni raga.
- (10) Dandaniti Kalpita Katha in Sama raga .
- (11) Mahādevāci Prarthana in Suddhasaveri raga.
- (12) SakhTne Nayakice Srama NayakasaKalavoonā Saṅghatanōpaya Karane in Arabhi raga.
- (13) Sakhine Nayakisa Buddhivadha Saṅganyāci Kalpitha Katha in Pantuvarali raga.

(1) A. Krishnaswāmi Mahādīck Rao Sahab - Ed., - "Kōrvayāñche Sāhityāche Jinnas"(Dance-pieces in Marathi) - Vol.I and II: T.S.M. Scns No.79 and 275; T.M.S.S.M. Library.

(14) Suladi Nirupana in Ragamalika.

(15) **Salāmāca** Jinas Kalpita **Kathā** in Attana **raga**.

It is learnt from the contemporary records that Nirupanas were performed not only in the court but also in different temple festivals.

In addition to the Nirupanas, his another work entitled Vividha Karnataka Raga **Rāgini**<sup>(1)</sup>, consists of dance numbers set to several ragas and **Sūlādi tālas**. Similarly, his **sūlādi** Nirupana employs different ragas set to **sūlādi Sapta tālās**, fashioned on the lines of ragamalika and **tālamālīkā**. It is interesting to note that King Sahaji too composed several Suladi's known as **Saptasagara suladi**. Such creative works which were once remarkable for its richness and variety demand a definite study as they have not been adequately known and these dance numbers if revived will prove to be a valuable addition to the present day **Bharatanatyam** repertoire. In this context, King **Serfoji's** works can be considered as a milestone in the growth and development of the theory and practice of the Sadir dance.

Apart from these works on classical music and dance, the royal composer is said to have authored a **Kuravañji nataka** as well as a **lavani**, a Marathi folk musical form.

**Kuravañji:-** Kuravanji is a type of dance drama which evolved in Tamilnadu and received abundant patronage and popularity during the Maratha rule in Thanjavur. The theme of Kuravanji nataka is usually nothing more than the depiction of the lovelorn sickness of the heroine towards her lover who is usually the King, or the presiding deity of a temple. The hero goes out in a procession with all royal insignia, the

(1) Marathi Manuscript **No.2168**; T.M.S.S.M. Library

heroine who happens to view the procession, is overcome by feelings of love on seeing the hero. Smitten with love, she requests her intimate friend to go and convey her love to the hero. It is at this stage of the story that the heroine's pangs of separation are mellowed by the soothing words of the kuratti or the gypsy girl (who is indeed the important character in the Kuravanji natakas) who predicts that the wishes of heroine shall be fulfilled and would soon get united with her lover. But interestingly, the **Kuravañji** composed by Serfoji called Devendra Kuravanji drastically departs from the traditional kuravanji natakas in respect to its thematic content. Perhaps it was due to this reason that the present **nātaka** became highly popular not only for its artistic value but also from its educative stand point. Amazingly, Devendra **Kuravañji** deals with the subject of world geography i.e., the geographical description of several countries, mountains and rivers and their, then existing names are narrated in a scholarly manner by Kuratti with the help of beautiful songs in simple Marathi language. Unlike the traditional Kuravanji natakas, this particular Kuravanji commences with the entrance of the Bhill woman who explains to the heroine Indrani that she had visited all the countries in the world and starts with the musical narration of those places. After the **description**, in the similar manner of usual Kuravanji natakas, this dance-drama comes to an end with the Bhill woman(kuratti) assuring the heroine's union with her lover. Immensely pleased by her prediction, the heroine presents kuratti with costly gifts. The final scene ends with Bhill woman joining her husband kuravan on her way to their home and they both leave the place happily.

In this Kuravanji, "The verses and compositions are sweet, simple, emotional and instructive. Elegance and easy flow of language are the

key note of Serfoji's work”(1). By adapting such a populist art form for explaining the geography of the world, Serfoji had not only inculcated an interest but had also made the subject more appealing and understandable for the students of his kingdom.

Lavani:- King Serfoji was a renowned versifier of beautiful lavani called 'Tristhali vātrēchya Lavanvā'(2). Lavani is the traditional religious folk music or ballad songs of the Marathas. They are invariably performed during socio-religious festivals such as 'Holi' and on the fifth day after the child's birth known as 'pāñcvi'.(3) Lavani is usually rendered in unison by a group of songsters. These songs represent rhythmic poetic expressions of folk-lore and popular beliefs.(4) During the period of Serfoji-II and his son Śivāji-II, Lavani songs were composed in Tamil language also. This particular lavani from the royal pen describes the pilgrimage undertaken by the King to several holy places of the Northern India such as Kāśī, Prayag etc. Every alliterative poem incorporated in the lavani glorifies the significance of the shrine and the deity worshipped therein. In this context, it would be interesting to note that Serfoji, during this religious sojourn to Benaras, made good collection of rare manuscripts, inaccessible anywhere, in return for his precious jewels. On his return to Tanjore, he ordered several court poets and scholars to transcribe these manuscripts in the library for its effective and extensive use by the future generations.

- (1) Tyāgarāja Jatavallabhar - Introduction - 'Devendra Kuravanji by Rāja Serfoji-II' - T.S.M. Series No. 18; Thanjavur - 1950 - P.4
- (2) A. Krishnaswāmi Mahāḍick Rao Saheb - Ed., - 'Tristhali vātrēchya Lavanvā' By King Serfoji-II; T.S.M. Series No.37; T.M.S.S.M. Library - 1951.
- (3) Interview with A.Krishnaswāmi Mahāḍick Rao Saheb. dated 24-4-94, Thanjavur Palace.
- (4) Tnisthali vātrēchvā lavanva and Sarabhendra Theerthāvali - T.S.M. Series No.37; Appendix-A:P2

Marking the successful completion of his trip to Benares, the King is said to have performed the Kumbhābhisekam (coronation ceremony) of the Big temple, installed 108 Śivaliṅgas in the temple and donated a silver elephant and bull. These are inferred from the inscriptions in the Big temple. Likewise, he is said to have constructed and renovated many temples in and around Tanjore and from the inscriptions in 'Anandavalli' temple which is one kilometre away from Tanjore, we learn that a Nartana Mandapa and a Nandi Mandapa were built by King Serfoji-II.

Contribution to Western Music:- Raja Serfoji was himself a past master of both Indian and Western music. It was Rev. William Gerrick, the eminent teacher of young Serfoji who was responsible for inculcating a right attitude and deep interest in Serfoji for European music and instruments, Serfoji was also credited with the formation of the Tanjore Band which was a combined Orchestra consisting of Indian and European instruments. Tanjore Band gained highest popularity during Serfoji's period and many of the European wind and stringed instruments such as clarinet, violin came to be utilised for the first time in the South Indian chamber music and Sadir dance. The influence of Western music on Serfoji and his court musicians seems to have been to a greater extent. The concluding Carana svaras of some of the Varnams(dance composition) produced during the period were called as 'Notu Svaras' indicating the impact of English 'Notes' of the Band music on Karnatic music. Several musicians playing European instruments were specifically engaged for the purpose of Rājāh's marriage which was celebrated on the 26th February 1799.

It is learnt from the records of the Tanjore district 1749-1835, that on the request of the Governor of Madras, Raja sent the musicians of

the Tanjore Band, among whom was the accomplished Vina player Varahapayyar, the able minister of Serfoji who took the main lead and the whole orchestra is said to have received highest approbation from the governing forces who indeed lauded Serfoji for his exemplary creative ideas and egalitarian outlook. Serfoji composed many songs with European staff notation for the Indian ragas which have been recorded in several of the music books specially maintained by Raja himself and it is further noted from the records, that Rajah's piano forte and music books were lent to the wives of the Residents and Collectors of the East India Company. The services of the tuners for instance, the Rajah's Brahmin tuner of piano forte were requisitioned by the European ladies on the 17th Sep 1817<sup>(1)</sup>.

It is inferred from the records of Tanjore that on the request of Raja Serfoji, several European instruments such as Harp, Clarinet, Bag pipe, Harpsichord, Pianoforte, Brass Horns, concert Trumpet, Tambourine and Organ were supplied from London by the Resident Mr. Benjamin Torin<sup>(2)</sup>. King Serfoji-II was presented with a German Flute in the year 19-3-1804<sup>(3)</sup>. Raja was also said to have received lessons and several musical books on the western music from Thomas Chapman and other teachers of repute. Because of the western influence many European instruments got added to the Indian band and Western dance on par with Sadir and Hindustani nautch was also encouraged in the court.

The Court of King Serfoji-II:- Needless to mention that the court of this enlightened prince was beaming bright with the brilliance of

(1) Guide to the records of Tanjore (1749-1835) - Vol.VI - P. 192

(2) Lord Valentin's World Travels P.360, T.M.S.S.M. Library.

(3) Guide to the records of Tanjore - Vol-V, bundle - 3.417 - P. 104

numerous scholars and poets of high repute among whom Serfoji himself was a blazing star. Serfoji is said to have held and presided over Vidvat Sabhas, musical seminars and discussions in his court. The Scholars and poets who ornamented his court were -

1. Uthke Govindacarya
2. Hirusvami Ghātke
3. Tammācārya
4. Kuppacarya alias Raṅganātha Kavi
5. Narasimha Śāstri
6. Kṛsnasvāmi/Kṛsna Śāstri
7. Subba Dīksit
8. Cakravarti
9. Kottaiyur Sivakkolundu Dēśikar
10. Srinivasa
11. Venkateśa Śāstri
12. Muttusvāmi Dikṣitar
13. Govinda Kavi
14. Virupaksa Kavi
15. Śiva Kavi

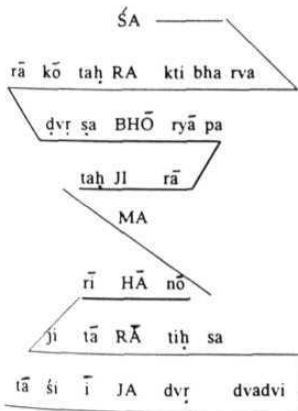
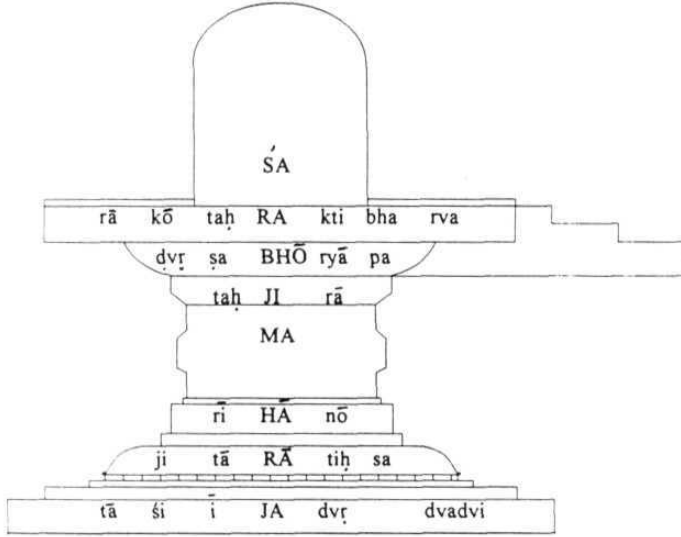
Most of these poets have produced Kāvya in Sanskrit based on puranic themes. Govinda Kavi who was an ardent devotee of Lord Siva is said to have authored Danurmāsa purāṇa based on Agneya purāṇam. The theme of Vykhasya mahatmiyam and pancanada mahatmiyam revolves around Skandapurāṇam and Tiruvaiyyar Sthala puranam respectively. Virupākṣakavi and Ranganatha Kavi were said to have translated several Sanskrit treatises of the Nayak period into Marathi. Some of the translated works of Virupaksa Kavi are (1) Agnisvara mahatmiyam (2) Pancanada



# Śarvabhaktirataḥkōrādvr̥ṣabhōryāparājitaḥ

Manoharijitaratiḥ sadvidvadvr̥jaiśitā

1. Who is ardently devoted to Siva?
2. Who is the foremost of the Kings?
3. Who did not suffer a defeat?
4. Who is of charming personality?
5. Who gained victory over his enemies?
6. Who can head an assembly of scholars?



No. 12

Mahiatmiyam (3) **Padma purana** (4) **Adi Kailasa Mahatmiyam** (5) **Siva bhakta Vilasam**. Of these **Śivabhakta Vilasam** is considered as his best production which deals with the history of the 63 Nayanmars or Siva bhaktas. In most of his works he had eulogised his patron for his multifarious activities, especially the establishment of the educational institution 'Nava Vidya Kalanidhi'. Gunaratnakara is another panegyric in Sanskrit written by **Nrsimhakavi** on his patron **Serfoji-II**. **Ranganatha Kavi** alias **Kuppacarya** had written '**Kartika Mahatmiyam**' and '**Tula Mahatmiyam**' which are also based on mythology. **Govindācārya Uthke** on the orders of King **Serfoji-II** is said to have prepared the compilation of **Natya S'astra Saṁgraha**<sup>(1)</sup>, a text on theory and practice of **Natya** in **Marathi**. His other works are '**Sīvalīla**', '**Harilīla**', '**Ramā-Umā Samvāda**' written in **Harikatha** style. He was also proficient in astrology and is accredited with the work '**Dvādaśabhāvas**', based on the 12 zodiac signs and its qualities fashioned on the **maṅgalāṣṭaka** style of composition. '**Śarabhendra Thirthāvalī**' authored by **Siva Kavi** gives a detailed account of the King's pilgrimage to various places of worship in and around **Tanjore**.

**Subba Diksīt** one of the renowned Sanskrit court poets had written an ornamental poem in the **Sivalinga bandha** type, a rare form of composing poetry found in Sanskrit literature. The verse given in the block poses six questions for which the answer **Sarabhoji Maharaja** is found in block letters from the central top to the bottom line of the **linga**(vide plate No. 12). The name **Sarabhendra** or **Sarabha Bhupala** is the Sanskritised version of the name **Serfoji** which is found in the works of the court poets. Several slokas written in praise of **Serfoji-II** by these

(1) **K. Vāsudeva Śāstri**, Ed., **Natya Sāstra Saṅgraha** - Vol. I, T.S.M. Series No.52, T.M.S.S.M.Library, **Thanjavur**, 1990.

poets have been catalogued in the Marathi manuscript section under the title 'Śarabhendra Stuti Sloka Va Arya'<sup>(1)</sup> Some of these Slokas are mentioned in the Appendix.

Music:- In the realm of music, the period of Raja Serfoji may be called as the august age of music as the Trinity of South Indian music - Śrī Tyagarajasvami, Sri Śyāmā Sastri and Sn Muttusvamy Diksitar lived at Tanjore during his reign. The blossoming of the musical genius at Tanjore had paved way for the evolution of several ragas, the popularisation of the musical form 'Krti' and such other aspects, all in unison had indeed enriched the scientific system of South Indian music.

The treasure of the divine compositions of these three great personalities has not only placed Karnatic music on a very high pedestal, but their voluminous lofty creations are today reckoned with Karnatic music itself. Among the musical trio, Sri Muttusvamy Diksitar was patronised by King Serfoji. Diksitar in one of his krtis 'Nabhōmani Candragiri Nayanam' in raga Nabhomani - Triputa tāla, had extolled King Serfoji as the ardent devotee of Lord Brhadīśvara. Sri Śyāmā Sastri was a beneficiary of royal favours but saint musician Tyagarajasvami spurned the royal patronage and 'Nidhicālā Sukhama' in raga Kalyani bears testimony to this, yet the King had highest regard for the saint musician and is said to have paid frequent visits to the latter's residence. During the time of King Serfoji. there was an influx of musicians, scholars and artists from far and wide to this distinguished seat of art. The avowed purpose of their migration was for the furtherance and enrichment of their art and acknowledgment of their talents by this illustrious scholar King Serfoji. For centuries, Tanjore court was known for its musical excellence

(1) M.S.No.1853; Des No.2178

and was famous for musical contests. Several acclaimed musicians from different regions visited Tanjore and threw challenges to their counterparts at the court in order to prove their versatility and supremacy but often accepted defeat. One such interesting anecdote relating to the musical combat between **Syāmāsāstri** and Bobbili **Kēśavayya**, a famous musician from Vijayanagar is worthy of note. Several **maestros** gave musical performances and displayed their talents in fond anticipation of receiving the appreciative nod from the highly esteemed royal musician. One such occasion to cite, was a famous singer from Andhra, visited Serfoji's court and gave an excellent performance. Serfoji who was an achievement oriented King by nature, appreciated the **maestro's** musical talents, presented him with a Jan turban or Paga. The musician, considering it as a rare honour bestowed on him by a King of such a stature, came forth with an extempore composition with the **Svaraksarās** Sa Ri Ga Pa Ga, (Zari paga or turban) acknowledging his valuable felicitation. Serfoji who was an illustrious composer in return enthralled by his spontaneous reply with the **Svarāksarās** Sa da Pa Ga, which meant that he presented a **Sadā** paga or ordinary turban and that even a JarT turban was not really a match for the maestro's high musical talents. This anecdote once again signifies in unrefutable terms the King's extempore versifying ability, his humbleness towards artists and above all, his unstinted devotion for art and letters.

It is known from the contemporary records<sup>(1)</sup> that this enthusiastic patron maintained amicable relations with **Mahārāja** of Travancore **Sri Svāti** Tirunal who was also a true votary of art and literature and one of the meritorious kings among the galaxy of Royal composers.

- (1) R. Shelvānkar - A Report on the Modi Manuscripts in the Sarasvatī Mahal Library; Cf.M. **Sceerālan** - "Serfoji Mahārāja (A.D-1798-1832)-**Mannar Serfoji**" - **Avvukkōvai** - Vol.11 - T.S.M. Series - No.300 - 1990 - P.118.

Maharaja Svati Tirunal, even before his accession to the throne, was associated with King Serfoji and they were said to have exchanged scholars, musicians and their personal compositions too. It is learnt that some of the copies of famous works bound in superior velvet and gold were sent by Raja Svati Tirunāl as gift to his royal friend Serfoji-II.

Among the many musicians of repute who went from Tanjore to Trvancore were Merusvami, Vadivelu, (youngest of the Tanjore Quartette), Kannayya Bhagavatar; and Sivarāmaguru better known as Ksirabdhī Sastri. Merusvami alias Ananta Padmanābha Gosvami, a saint singer from Maratha, introduced the ardent prince Svati Tirunal to the intricacies of music in its theory and practice<sup>(1)</sup>. Merusvami was considered as the most esteemed among the court musicians of King Serfoji-II. He was the pioneer in popularising the religious musical entertainment - Harikathākālakṣepam<sup>(2)</sup>, at Tanjore which had its genesis in Maharashtra. Some of the celebrated musicians who adorned the court of the King Serfoji were -

1. Sankarābharanam Narasayya
2. Todi Sitārāmayya
3. Anai-Ayyā brothers
4. Pallavi Doraisvami Ayyar
5. Tanjore Quartette
6. Muvvallūr Sabhapatayya
7. Kottayur Sivakkolundu Deśīkar
8. Vedanayakam Pillai
9. Pallavi Gopālayya

(1) Dr. S. Venkita Subramonia Iyer - "Swāti Tirunal And His Music" - published by College Book House ; Trivandrum - 1975 - P.7.

(2) Ibid - P.156.

10. Sonti Venkata Ramanayya (Guru of Sri Tyāgarāja).
11. Vina Perumalayya
12. Athana Appayya
13. Dharmayya Ramasāmayya
14. Varahappayya Diksit

Several court musicians noted for the specialisation in particular ragas and pallavi singing became popular with the appellation, pallavi and the names of the ragas prefixed to their names. To cite a few - Todi Sitaramayya, Sankarabharanam Narasayya, Athana Appayya, Pallavi Gopallayya, Pallavi Doraisvami Ayyar etc.

Vina Perumalayya, became famous for playing the Bhairavi raga for 3 hours daily for 10 consecutive days without the repetition of the already rendered Sangatis. In recognition of the artiste's manodharma sangita and amazing feat, an entire village of Mahipala was awarded by Serfoji and since then the musician was known as Mahipalai Vina Perumalayya. Likewise, the nagasvaram player Tiruvazhundur Nagasvara Subramanyam is said to have received Silver Nagasvaram from the king as reward for his expertise in playing on the instrument. Several modi manuscripts refer to the liberal patronage of gifting Sarvamānya lands and houses by the king to the court musicians and Bhagavata mēla artists attached to the court.

Dance - Sadir:- Among the Maratha rulers, Raja Serfoji-II occupies significant place in the history and development of 'Sadir dance' also referred to as Thanjavur Natya, presently called as 'Bharatanatyam'. His court was remarkable with the confluence of many eminent



No. 13 **Sadir** - Thanjavur Natya



One of the paintings at the Tanjore temple-paas showing a dancer in traditional Bharatanatyam dress



No.13(a)

A mural painting at the Tanjore temple of a dancer in North Indian dance costume.

nattuvanars(dance teachers), composers, musicians and dancers whose creative energies fostered the development of Sadir and marked the period as the most innovative and distinguished in the annals of Bharatanatyam. Many of the dance compositions which even now enjoy great popularity in Bharatanatyam recitals, are ascribed to the galaxy of great composers and nattuvanars who adorned the court of this distinguished king. The artistic and the intellectual atmosphere of the Tanjore court was further illuminated with the advent of the four illustrious brothers, Cinnayya, Ponnayya, Sivanandam and Vadivelu popularly known as 'Tanjore Quartette'. They deserve the greatest credit of systematising the sadir attam format, which is still being continued under the nomenclature- **Bharatanatyam**. Centuries contribution to dance in Tanjore by the Kings and several luminaries in the field of this art, to cite a few, the dedicated efforts of the worthy predecessors of the famous Tanjore Quartette Gangaimuttu, Mahadeva Annavi and Subbarāya Oduvar, had paved way for the blossoming of the art that reached its pinnacle of glory in the esteemed court of King Serfoji-II. A noteworthy feature of the contribution to dance by the Tanjore brothers was that, they launched new teaching and learning methods and improvised, developed and established the pedagogy for Sadir and systematised its format and the presentation order with an artistically graded progression of dance numbers. The prolific output of the court musicians, namely Tanjore Quartette. Muvvallūr Sabhapatayya, Pallavi Doraisvami Ayyar etc., have not only enriched the repertoire of Sadir dance but also have contributed in unfolding the various developmental trends which the art form witnessed and facilitated in accentuating a definite standard of excellence.

It was due to the utmost devotion, dedication and bountiful patronage extended by the king that 'Sadir' steadily attained high level of



excellence especially during the period of King Serfoji-II. In this context it would be quite interesting to note the origin of the term Sadir which has many versions to offer regarding its coinage.

Dr.R.Nagasvamy, a scholar in the field of dance and music, opines that the term 'Sadir' had been used to denote the beautiful form of classical dance in vogue in Tamilnadu as nearly as 1300 years ago. This may be seen from the Tevaram of Tirujnana Sambandar which refers to the dance conforming to Jatis as Sadir<sup>(1)</sup>.

**\*Tēvāram:-**

Vidivazhi marayavar mizhalai ular nadam  
Sadivazhi varuvad5r 'Sadire'  
Sadivazhi varuvador S'adir udair umai  
atigunar pugalvadum aḷage.<sup>(2)</sup>

The term 'Sadir' according to Sri R. Nagasvāmy, is a derivative of the Sanskrit word 'Catura' meaning beautiful<sup>3</sup>. But, surprisingly it is to be noted that the term Sadir was not in popular usage, as there seems no mention of the term in the works of the post-Sambandar period. Sri.T.S.Pārthasārathy, well-known musicologist and music critic, holds the view<sup>(4)</sup> that the term Sadir might have originated during the Nayak

- (1) Dr. R. Nāgasvāmy - 'Dance in Tamil literature' - Proceedings of 10th Nāṭyakalā Conference - Madras. Dec. - 1990 - P.7
- (2) Tēvāraṇḍiganaḷ, Published by K. Subrahmanya Pillai Srivaikuntam, Tiruchendur - 1980 - PP.399-400.
  - The verse describes the beautiful dance of Lord Siva (Alagēśvarar) at the shrine of Tiruvizhimizhalai. Sambandar praising the cosmic dance, highlights the vedic tradition and the sincerity of the priests in performing various rites as humble offerings to the Lord. In this direction, he mentions the dance set to jatis performed by Lord Siva as S'adir and the Saint poet wonders whether it is possible for anyone to express the beauty of the Lord in His dancing form.
- (3) Dr. R. Nāgasvāmy - 'Dance in Tamil literature' - P.7.
- (4) T.S. Parthasārathy - "Bharatanatyam and Allied Dances of South India": Seminar papers on performing Arts of Southern Region - published by The Institute of Traditional Cultures University Buildings, Madras - 1996- P.6.



No 13(b) Hindustani Natya



No 14 Maratha Court. Thanjavur



No 15

**Sangita** Mahal, Thanjavur

period evolved out of the Telugu word “Caduru” which means a 'Sabha' and a 'dance performance arranged during occasions like weddings'. The word Caduru or the squared dais (**Caduraṅga**) meaning Sabha or court has been mentioned by the great composer **Kṣṛṭrayya** in one of his famous padas-Vedukato in raga Devagandhari, **Aditāla**. Here the first Caranam states 'Caduru **midanē unna sāmī ki santōsamintinta kada**', which means "To the lord hovering over the dais" (Caduru) the pleasure was of boundless **measure**”(1). This verse is in reference to the Sabha or court of **Tirumala** Nayaka of Madura. According to Dr.Arudra, Scholar, poet and dance critic, "Sadir of Bhosala Kings is said to have taken its shape from erstwhile Karnatakam. Not only the music but also the dances of South India were called Karnatakam and in the Telugu districts the old Devadasis still call it as **Karnātakam**”(2). However, the term 'Sadir' perhaps coined during the Maratha period seems to be more convincing as these dance performances by the court dancers were usually witnessed by the kings seated in the large chamber known as Durbar, an urdu word which in the Marathi parlance is 'Sadar' means the court\*. And since the dance (**āttam**) was held in the court 'Sadar' the dance style itself came to be acclaimed as **Sadar-attam** or court dance. With the passage of time and as result of tongue-twisting, the pronunciation got slightly modified from Sadar to Sadir and ultimately the dance style was named as **Sadir-āttam**. Hence in all probability it was during the Maratha period

(1) **B. Rajani Kānta Rao - Kṣṛṭrayya** - published by Sahitya Akademi; New Delhi - 1981 - P.22.

(2) Dr. **Arudra** - '**Telugu dance traditions of Tanjore Court**'; Journal of Sri **Shanmukhananda** Fine Arts and **Sangeeta Sabha**, Bombay; Vol.XIV; 1988 - P. 19.

- According to Sri **Krishnasāmi** Maludick and Prince Tulajendra Raja **Sahab**, Sadir is apabhraṁsa or corrupted version of Sadar meaning court'. The **Sadir-āttam** was **invariably performed** by the court dancers on auspicious occasions such as **Vijayadasāmi**, New year's day, any celebrations in the Palace etc., and whenever foreign dignitaries and important persons happened to **visit the court**.



No. 16 Prince Tulajendra in 'Sadir Mā di'



No. 17 An inside view of 'Sadir Mā di'

that the 'Dasi-attam, came to be known as Sadir which was performed in the court.

The Sadir dance, Hindustani Natya and western dances in the court were usually whole night performances, lasting until dawn. These dances were held in the Sadir-madi\* (the term *māḍi*, both in Tamil and Marathi means first floor) facing the south of the five storeyed building in the palace. Sadir-madi situated in the natural surroundings with imposing structure, high roof is a well ventilated spacious hall with architectural beauty. One significant feature of Sadir-madi was the installation of the idol of Lord Vignesvara and it is learnt from modi manuscripts that even the western dances were performed in the Sadir-madi in front of the icon of Lord Vignesvara. The same Sadir-madi has been converted by the descendants of the **Maratha** Kings, into visitors room today. The research scholar had the privilege of interviewing the descendant of Raja Serfoji; Prince P.Tulajendra Raja Bonsle, the life member of the Sarasvati **Mahāl** Library, in the same hall. An interesting information elicited from the interview<sup>(1)</sup> worth knowing is that the women of the royal family were not only entertained with these dance performances, but were even privileged to learn the art from the Raja Nartakis or court dancers in their own respective chambers. King **Pratāpasimha's** two daughters, Sukanya and Sanya were said to have been accomplished Sadir dancers. The Rajanartakis were residing in the Palace and they were given prior intimation regarding their performances in the court but when any foreign dignitary or **guest**. visited the court, without prior notice (which was rampant during **Serfoji-II's** period) the court dancers were summoned to

- Sadir-madi is also referred to as **Huzdōr-māḍi** and **Ratnasabha** which could accommodate thousand people. - Interview with **Sri Krishnasvāmi Mahadick** and Prince P. Tulajendra.

( i ) **Interview with** Prince P.Tulajendra, dated **25-4-94**, at **Thanjavur** Palace.



No. 18 Roof of 'Sadir Madi' with decorated supportive columns



No. 19  
The researcher  
interviewing Pnnce Tulajendra



No.20  
The researcher in interaction  
with Sri.KrsnasvamiMahadick

perform few simple dances". The court dancers commenced **their** performances by **offering** prayers to the God, followed by salutations to the King and other important personages present in the court. These dancers used to perform only to the songs composed for dance and they had to strictly follow the traditions of the court. Dancing before the royal presence was not an easy task. Every dancer had to undergo rigorous training to prove her mettle and win the appreciation of the King. The meritorious court dancers in addition to their monthly salaries were given presents by the kings immediately after the performance as a token of appreciation of their scholarship.

**Costume:-** The two pictures<sup>(2)</sup> depicting Sadir or Thanjavur Nāṭyam and Hindustani Nāṭya (vide plate No. 13(a & b)) found in the collection of Indian Art preserved by The Victoria and Albert museum, in London are quite interesting. These pictures were painted during the period of Serfoji-II (1800 A.D.) by artists of the Tanjore Court who were entrusted by the British residents in India to paint the traditional costumes worn by the people of Thanjavur especially the dancers and the musicians.

The first picture shows the Sadir dancer in action who is adorned, in fan like dress, which is typical of the present day costume of the Bharatanatyam dancers. She is followed by six musicians who are depicted in the costume of dhoti in Kaccham. Kurta and the upper sash tied around their waist and covering their heads with maharashtra turban.

- (1) Interview with Krishnaswāmi Mahadick dated 24-4-94, at Thanjavur Palace. It is learnt that even the wife of Sri Mahadick and his mother, who was the daughter of King Sivāji-II, had the opportunity to receive instruction in Sadir dance. The Rājanartakīs were adept in the art of dance, yet some of them received advance training from court musicians-nattuvanārs. Inbetween the dancers and nattuvanārs, a transparent curtain was held and the nattuvanārs along with the vadyabṛṇḍa (which included women musicians) were seated on the other side facing the dancer.
- (2) Cf. Dr. R. Nagaswāmy - "The Thanjavur Nāṭya on Canvas" - King Serfoji-II's birth centenary commemoration volume; - T.S.M. Series No. 283; T.M.S.S.M. Library - 1989 - Pp. 16-17.

Among the 6 musicians, two men wielding the cymbals are invariably the nattuvanars, the other four musicians are seen playing on different musical instruments such as violin, mṛdaṅgam, Flute and bagpipe or tutti. These musicians are followed by two young dancing girls along with a woman who is presumed to be either the mother of the danseuses or an elderly devadasi. The first picture shows the sadir dancer in the half sitting posture otherwise called in Tamil terminology as 'araimandi' which is the basic stance of the dance style. The label beneath the painting reads "Thanjavur Nāṭya" in Telugu script. The costume and the ornaments worn by these dancers in the picture conform to the present day pattern of dressing by the dancers in the Bharatanatyam recitals except for the long garland woven round their body extending from their right shoulder upto the knee.

The other canvas shows three Hindustani dancers in action. The dress worn by them is almost akin to the costume of North Indian Kathak dancers with ghagara or Lahanga (long skirt extending upto the knee) in the typical Rajput style with their heads partially covered with a duppatta or upper cloth.

The five musicians at the back of the dancers are seen garbed in Kurta, Pyjāmā and Maharashtra headgear, with the sash tied round their waists. All of them are shown playing on Hindustani musical instruments. Two are depicted playing on Sāraṅgi, one on pakhavaj, the other two on Tambura and one wielding the cymbals. Both, from the point of view of the costume and the musical instruments, it is apparent, that the dance is of North Indian origin.

Besides the Sadir dance, several folk art forms such as Lavani, Dummy horse dance, Pinnalkōlāttam (Goph dance), Modi dance and Kanchin



nautch\* were highly encouraged by the King Serfoji-II and his son Sivaji-II. King Serfoji's works on these populist art forms such as Kuravanji, Lavani and Goph dance highlight the King's interest in these arts which had gained high popularity along with its classical counterpart. Likewise, Kuravanji natakas and Bhagavatameja nātakas received enormous patronage at the hands of King Serfoji-II and Sivaji-II.

**Bhāgavatamēla Nataka**:- In the history of Indian classical traditional dance-dramas, Bhagavatameja natakas are the most popular temple art form which have become unique for its religious and aesthetic spectacle. Several villages in Tanjore District such as Melattur, Sūlamāṅgalam, Uttukkādu, Sāliyamaṅgalam and Teppertumanallūr were the true centres of these nātakās but Melattur, about 10 miles from Tanjore is the only village where this dance-drama form now survives, being annually enacted in the temple of Sri Lakshminarasimha Svāmi, during the Vaisaka or the month of April-May. The themes of these natakas culled from puranic lore are set to high standard of Karnatic music supplementing with the Sadir technique for dance and abhinaya, interspersed with poetic speeches and dramatic actions. The art form since ages has been a male practiced art by Bhāgavatars or men from the Brahmin families, adept in the triple arts of music, dance and drama and in which even the female roles in the natakas are impersonated by the males dressed in female attire.

- Modi and Kancin nautch are lighter types of folk dances of Maharashtra. The term modi means script, but in the context of dance it is the apabhramsa of Magudi or the snake charmer's pipe. Modi natyam is nothing but snake dance, performed by the dancer to the accompaniment of 'magudi'. Hence this dance was also called as Magudinatyam. Kancin dance, according to Sri Mahadick is an unsophisticated type of kathak dance. The kancin is a derivative of kancan meaning a girl and this dance is performed by a group of girls to the accompaniment of songs and rhythmic drumming of the percussive instrument.

From the Modi manuscripts we infer that separate Bhagavatamela troupes were attached to the court as well as to the Chattrams instituted by the king in the villages in Tanjore like the Muktambālpuram Chattram at Orathanadu (Orathanadu situated 18 Km from Tanjore) and that the expenditure incurred for the purchase of articles required for the performance of these natakas in the palace was met from the royal treasury. The girls of the Bhagavatamela troupe attached to the court were given free meals, but this practice was later dispensed with in the year 1825 and the girls were given salary in cash and kind. Another interesting information elicited from the modi manuscript is that there was exchange of ornaments and other costumes for staging the natakas and dance programmes between these nattuva(Sadir) and natya mēlas(Bhagavatamēla) attached to the court. Redolent of Nayak court, King Serfoji's court too had women musicians who were not only adept in conducting the dance but also proficient in handling percussion instruments such as Mrdaṅgam. From the modi manuscript, we infer that an artiste by name Rukmini was the nattuvanar of the nataka section<sup>(1)</sup> and that Kamaksi played on Mrdaṅgam efficiently<sup>(2)</sup>.

Several natakas produced from the royal pen as well as the court poets of the Maratha Kings were especially enacted during important festivals such as Vinayaka Caturti. Navaratri(Dusshera), Deepāvali and so on. During the Vinayaka Caturti celebrations, which usually lasted for nearly 22 days, each of these dance-dramas was staged every day, which was followed by dance and music performances. The dance recitals were given by the descendants of the court dancers and the musical concerts

(1) Modi Bundle 4(c) - Subbundle 10; A.D. 1845

(2) Modi Manuscript No.3 . P.201

by the Vidyadhikaras or experts in the field of music. It is evident from the manuscripts of King **Sivāji-II**'s period that various natakas were performed in the palace which testify to the existence of such a practice during the reign of his father, King **Serfoji-II**.

Some of the natakas enacted are as follows:-

1. Sarvanga SundarT natakam of Giriraja Kavi in the year 1852.
2. Pancabhasa vilasa **nātaka** of Sahaji-II and the names of the artists who participated were **Kāntimati**, **Dōraisvāmy**, **Gokilavani**, **Sivarāma**, **Sarasasikāmani** Ganapati, and the Kuratti or **bhill** woman's character was portrayed by **Krsna gurumūrti**.
3. **Subhadrā** Kalyanam natakam of King Serfoji-II - This is in Marathi language written in Telugu script
4. **Rati Kalyānam** nataka of Sahaji-II. **Kōlātam** was also performed by a group of artists.
5. Samantopakhyana natakam of King **Pratāpasimha** - Marathi - Telugu script.
6. **Śaṣipurāndara** natakam,
7. Govardhanodhara natakam
8. Satipatidana vilasam
9. Vignesvara **Kalyāna** natakam

The dance recitals by the dasi Kaveri's daughter Krsna and daughters of Candraprabha and Sundari were presented after the completion of the natakas and expert musicians were also said to have given concerts at night which lasted until dawn.

**Saṅgīta Mahāl** and **Maratha Durbar Hall**:- In addition to the dance programmes at '**Sadir-mādi**', folk dances and the **Bhāgvatamēḷa**



No.21

The Maratha Durbar Hall, Thanjavur

The Maratha Durbar Hall with a backdrop of  
King Serfoji-II and his ministers



No.23

Portrait painting of a daisiuse as Kaji Durbar Hall



No.24

An European Dancer with the native dancing girl



**nātakas** were also regularly enacted in 'Sangita Mahal', an auditorium built during Nayak period which the Maratha Kings "enlarged and designed with such acoustic perfection that from the remotest corners of the hall one could hear the softest tune and the highest footfall; the hall which is a triumph of artistic and engineering skill symbolizes the acme of the evolution of the dance hall from the **Kiottambalam** of the **Silappadikāram age**"<sup>(1)</sup>.

Likewise, it was in the Maratha Durbar hall's courtyard, wrestling competitions and such other sports and arts were witnessed by the Kings. The Maratha Durbar hall was modeled and rebuilt by **Sāhaji-II** (1684 A.D.) and named it as **Siva Sowdāh**. It is situated on the eastern side of the **Sarasvati Mahāl** Library. "Having a courtyard in front, the Hall consists of two mandapas while the front mandapa is having wooden sloping roof covered with tiles supported by wooden pillars, the raised mandapas on the rear side is made up of granite stone plastered with lime and brick, the entire ceiling and stacco figures of ten avatars or incarnations of Visnu are painted with elegance and grace. Some hunting scenes of royal personages appear on the Northern wall. The portrait paintings drawn on the eastern wall are master pieces of Maratha **period**"<sup>(2)</sup>. Among these paintings, a beautiful dancing girl in the pose of Goddess **Kālī** and an European dancer with a native dancing girl and Lord Krsna playing on Violin are truly the most attractive ones.

"A beautiful durbar made up of wood, decorated with glass pieces and supported by wooden pillars is placed on a rectangular granite stone in

(1) **K.A.N. Sāstri and K.R.V. Rāman** - "The Tamils and the Art of Dance": Bulletin of the **Institute of Traditional cultures** - Madras - 1971 - P. 15.

(2) Bulletin **Board**, Maratha Durbar Hall. **Thanjavur Palace**.



No.25

Portrait painting of Lord Krsna playing on the Violin



No.26

Wooden sloping roof of Maratha Durbar Hall



No.27 Muktabai



No.28 Marble statue of Raja Serfoji-II

this **mandapa**. It is believed that the Maratha Kings used to give audience to the public by being seated in this Durbar. The Durbarhall is today declared as a protected monument under the Tamilnadu Ancient and Historical monuments and archeological sites and remains Act of 1966. A subterranean passage 30 feet in length in this Durbar hall was recently discovered by the Department of Archeology"<sup>(1)</sup>. Likewise, the **Muktāmbālpuram\* Chattram** at Orathanadu is rich in sculptures. The sculptures of Natya Vinayaka, several musicians playing on musical instruments are quite interesting sights for viewing.

Modi Records:- The modi records of Sarasvati Mahal Library furnish abundant, well documented information, regarding the day to day affairs of the court, which are hitherto invaluable in assessing the musical and dance activities of the court of King Serfoji-II. From these manuscripts we infer the existence of separate departments for music, dance, Bhagavatamela and that the musicians belonging to these departments were referred to as 'Vidyadhik' which means experts or scholars. The Music and Dance department had in its establishment three different systems of music and dance, the Karnatic or South Indian, the Hindustani- (North Indian) and the Western music and dance.

Musicians of high reputation were given the portfolios of Superintendent or Supervisors whose duty was to see to the proper functioning of the department. The staff of the department comprised not only vocalists, instrumentalists but also writers and copyists of several works on music,

(1) **Op.cit., Bulletin Board.**

\* **Muktāmbālpuram** chattram was constructed by **Raja Serfoji-II** in memory of his concubine **Muktāmbāl**.

Sculptures at Orathnadu-Muktambalpuram Chattram



No.29



No.30



No.31



No.32



dance and literature. In 1819<sup>(1)</sup>, Dharmayya Ramasamayya, a distinguished court Vinā Vidvan of King Serfoji-II was appointed as the Superintendent of the Music, Dance and Bhagavatamela (Na'taks'ala) departments and was authorised by the King to execute various administrative activities such as remuneration to artists, purchase, repairing and tuning of musical instruments and also for their safe maintenance. Ramasāmayya<sup>(2)</sup> was also a master of several fine arts and sciences. His ancestors were the court musicians who held dignified positions of high rank in the Tanjore Samasthānam from the reign of King Tulaja-II. Varahappayya or Varahappa Diksīt, the son of Ramasamayya, too was initially appointed by King Serfoji as the Superintendent of Srotriyam Villages. After the demise of King Serfoji, Varahappayya served in the court of King Śivāji who appointed him as the commander-in-chief (Senadurandara) of the active regiment of Tanjore court and also as the Superintendent of all the musicians in the palace, both native and the English band. Following the footsteps of his father, he played an effective role in the administration of the various departments entrusted to him. Varahappayya received training in the art of playing vina from his illustrious father and was also privileged to learn English music on Violin and Piano from the British residents. He is said to have received several books and lessons in western music and himself had a vast collection of books on English music in his possession. It was at the request of the then Governor of Madras, that Raja Serfoji sent his entire orchestra of Tanjore band to Madras under the able headship of Varahappayya who

(1) Modi records - **Bundle** 503 T.M.S.M. Library.

(2) Information regarding the biographical details of Śrī Dharmayya Rāmasāmayya and his son Varahappayya has been elicited from the letter dt.20-6-1966, written by Sri T.V Dharmaraja Diksītār, the great grandson of Sri Varahappayya to Dr. S. Seetha, Head of the Department of Indian Music(Retd), University of Madras.

Sculptures at Orathnadu-Muktambalpuram Chattram



No.33



No.34



No. 35



No. 36

received accolades from the Britishers for his outstanding performance. Owing to his abilities, talents and skill in various arts, the Sarasvati Mahal library was placed under his care and supervision by King , Sivaji-II. He, with the help of many distinguished pandits of various arts and sciences, who were invited from various provinces of the country with great effort, had prepared a detailed catalogue and indices for several manuscripts. Among his noteworthy pupils who had learnt the art of playing on Vina and Violin were Parameśvara Bhiagavatar, Parameśvara Gosāyi, Vaḍivēlu (the eminent nattuvanar in the court of King Serfoji-II) and Varahappayya's son Ramaiah Diksit who was also appointed as commander in-chief of the native regiment when his father (Varahappayya) held the honourable portfolio of private minister to King Sivaji-II. In many of the modi manuscripts, one finds the signature of Rāmasāmayya and his son Varahappa Diksit in the orders issued by them along with the royal seal.

Likewise, in the year 1821, another famous court musician Setu Annāji was also appointed as supervisor of the department of music, dance and Bhagavata mēla.

#### Rules and Regulations prescribed for the court dancers and nattuvanars:-

A careful and systematic analysis of the modi **manuscript**<sup>(1)</sup> throws significant light on the norms prescribed for the dancing girls as well as the dance teachers (Nattuvanars) by the temple authorities (Devasthānam) and the experts in the sphere of music. The norms stipulated for court **dancers**<sup>(2)</sup> include regimentals like the ornaments, certain types of dress and flowers which were forbidden to be worn by the dancers such as

(1) Modi manuscript No.1 -P.228. A.D 1821

(2) Modi manuscripts **Bundle** 2(C), Sub **bundle** 17; Section 2 (A); A.D. 1820

## I Ornaments:-

- (1) Candrama :- A head ornament worn on the left side of the head.
- (2) Panpattya :- Head ornament which covers the central hair line and ends with a pendant on the forehead.
- (3) **Hunsmore**:- Ornaments in the shape of swan or peacock.
- (4) Diamond Rakodi:- A diamond round brooch pinned to the back of the head.
- (5) Besari (Mukkutti):- Triangular nose stud.
- (6) Makara Kanti:- A gem studded pendant of a specified design.
- (7) Addigai:- A close fitting necklace.
- (8) Jodvi & biradi or Metti :- Toe-ring
- (9) Bugadi:- Ear studs clipped to the sides of the ear.
- (10) Kamarapatti or macpatta:- Metal Waist belt.
- (11) Tirukuppū:- A round flower shaped hair ornament pinned on to the plait, which should not be embedded with parrot or lamp shaped flower arrangement (Pancaya)
- (12) Paṭṭukuñjalam:- A hair attachment which ends with 3 rounds of balls made up of Pattu or silk ribbons should not be used but Tanga Kunjalam (gold kunjalam) can be used.
- (13) Kṛṣṇa kondai or an ornamented head bun should not be embedded with pearls.

The dancers were not supposed to apply the kum-kum and abir on their forehead in a cross-wise pattern.

## II Dress:-

1. They were forbidden to wear gold and silver brocaded sarees and extremely artistic embroideries and tapestries (*nāḍā*). They were disallowed sarees to which Jhalar or artistic lace and kusumbinada(violet lace) were sewn. But at the time of *pūja*, they were allowed to wear these dresses without any restrictions.
2. Only coloured shawl was to be worn round their shoulders and white cloth or pandra dupatta should not be used.
3. They were disallowed to use Kerchief.

III. Use of Palanquin:- The dancers were prevented from using the palanquin except with prior permission from the court with royal order and seal. There was provision for the use of the palanquin only on two occasions, namely

- (1) At the time of the dancer's maiden performance (*Alangati Kalyānam*).
- (2) In the case of illness of the dancer.

The only single exception from the operation of these norms was Sundari, the accomplished court danseuse and the favourite of King Serfoji-II who was privileged to perform the first dance in the court during the celebration of four festivals-

- (1) Gudyaca *Pāḍva* (New Year's day)
- (2) Navaratri
- (3) *Dipāvali* and
- (4) *Saṅkrānti*

She also had the special distinction of receiving a remuneration of Rs.15 for every dance on ordinary days and Rs.20 on the Vijaya Das'ami

festival along with a shawl worth **Rs.12** from Jamdarkhana\*. Sundari had the honour of receiving the King with **ārati** on his return from **Simōllāṅgaṇam\*\***, on **Vijayadaśami** day. Besides, this famous dancer was also said to have received many jewels such as diamond ear ring, Netticutti (head ornaments which covers the central hair line and ends with a pendant on the forehead); pan-parti, **Jhurṁōlya**, **Bhāṅga tilā** and so on as **inām** or presents for her extraordinary talents in the sphere of dance. All these privileges were not only applicable to Sundari but were also extended to her descendants. But the order issued during 1838 (six years after the demise of King Serfoji-II) modified the earlier order issued during the regime of Serfoji by allowing Sundari to enjoy these privileges and not her representatives in her line.

Along with these rules for dancers, it is equally important to note that there were special rules framed for the **Nattuvanārs**<sup>(1)</sup> or dance teachers which were to be strictly followed by them at the time of conducting the dance in the court.

The following are the important restrictions imposed on them .

- (1) They were forbidden to wear the turban and slippers. The angavastra or sash was to be worn round their waist and were expressly prohibited from covering their chests and shoulders.
- (2) They were not supposed to use gold cymbals for conducting the dance.
- (3) The dance performance for entertainment (Kellikai) in the

(1) Modi bundle No 2(c); Sub **bundle-17**; Section-III.

• Jamdarkhana is the store house of royal **clothes** and **jewels**.

•\* Simollanganam: On every **Vijayadaśami** day, it **was** the customary practice of the Maratha kings to cross the borders of **their** kingdom (**Simōllāṅgaṇam**) indicating their readiness to wage war with their enemies.

court, the dancer was supposed to dance **only** in praise of God and the King and shall not indulge in eulogising other ordinary mortals.

- (4) They should stand and perform in the **mela** and if he does not follow the rules, he shall be disallowed to perform.
- (5) **Puṅg** or the percussion instrument, modi **natyam** with bag pipe must not be performed without prior permission from the court.

Names of some of the court dancers during **Serfoji-II's** reign, known from Modi records are as follows:-

- (1) Sundari and her daughter
- (2) Kaveri
- (3) **Krsna**
- (4) Candrababha
- (5) **Veṅkatācalam** and her daughter Unnamalai
- (6) Kaveri and her daughter Periya,
- (7) **Muddumaṅga**
- (8) **Adilaksmi**
- (9) **Mangaḷa** Nayaki
- (10) **Rukmini** (Nātakashāla's nattuvarar)

Most of these dancers also served during the reign of **Sivāji-II**.

I. Western dances:- Like the **Sadir** and **Sāṅgitakatchēri** so also the western dances were also performed at night and the names of some of the artists who participated in the performances were -

Lady Catherine;  
James  
Joseph and his wife;  
Joseph White;  
Jeprai and his wife;  
Elizabeth Mascarine.

Some of the modi manuscripts pertaining to dance have been categorised under the two sections (I) Administration & (II) Entertainment. The manuscripts dealing with administration of dance activity in the court are as follows.

#### I. ADMINISTRATION

<u>S.No.</u>	<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Year &amp; M.S No</u>
1.	The dancing girls who performed in the court were given 23 cakrams and 5 panams with Raja's order and seal.	1817 Bundle(BN) 315 Page(P)-19
2.	On account of Sivāji-II's thread ceremony and in view of Sarasvati Pooja, the Dasis of Pancanada temple of Tiruvayyar and the melakārars or instrumentalists were given inam of 5 cakrams.	1811, BN123(C) P. 11.
3.	The dancing girls who performed in the court-Sadir Madi on Pournami or fullmoon night were given cash from khazana or royal treasury.	1811, BN123(c), P.26
4.	At the requisition made by ten dancing girls of the Venugopala-svāmi temple, 25 cakrams were given to these dasis and the two dancing girls who had performed in the court on full moon night(pournami)were given 5 cakrams*.	1811, Bundle (BN)123(c) P.36
•	Note:- 10 panams - 1 cakram 32 Kāsu - 1 panam 45 panams - 1 puli varāha 1 panam - 2 1/2 annas	



5. Dasi **Kāvēri**'s daughter Peria and Venkata-  
**chalam**'s daughter Unnamalai were remu-  
nerated for the Sadir **attam** in the court  
of **Serfoji-II**. 1801, Sarasvati  
Mahal Modi Tamil  
translation  
(S.M.M.T.)MS-1,P.7
6. The artists of Bhagavatamela troupe were  
given monthly salary as well as oil for  
weekly anointment. 1819, S.M.M.T.  
MS 10 - P.37
7. For the enactment of Mohinī Mahēśvara  
Parinaya nataka (written by Serfoji-II), the  
Bhagavatamela troupe were provided with  
articles necessary for the performance. 1803, BN 105 (c)  
- P.22
8. The expenses incurred regarding the  
materials/articles required such as  
butter,milk, curds, black cloth etc.  
were given from **Khazāna** with the court  
order and seal. 1804, BN 213(c)  
- P. 10
9. The **Bhāgavatamēla**'s Brahmin boys were  
given 4 **panams** for the purchase of  
articles required by them. 1804, BN 213(c)  
- P. 10
10. Purchase of instruments such as Tambura,  
**Sāraṅgi** and other articles like Green  
**macmul** cloth and silk **nāḍā** for natakasala. 1823, Book-5  
- P.40
11. **Mahāliṅgam** "Jatavallabhar" is said to have  
received 8 **velis** of **nañjai** and 3 **velis** of  
**puñjai** lands as **sarvamanya** from Raja  
Serfoji-II, for his proficiency in the vedic  
recitation in a specialised way.  
"Jatavallabhar" is an appellation given to  
the persons, for their expertise in the method 1823;  
S.M.M.T.-  
MS 4-P.5

of reciting vedas in which a pair of words is repeated thrice, in one repetition being in an inverted order.

12. Dattaji **Appāh**, a minister to King **Serfoji-II** Year 1805;  
was given 50 **velis** of land at Kumbhakonam MS-2 - P.227  
by the King as **srotriyam**. The area gifted,  
came to be referred to as 'Sarabhojirajapuram'.
13. Dance teacher Sabhapati was 1831,  
remunerated for his services. BN-31(C)
14. Nava vidya kalanidhi's literature teacher 1811;  
(for teaching kavya) and painting (citrakala) BN 123(C)  
teacher Sengammal were given monthly P.6  
salary of 15 **cakrams** and 3 **cakram** respectively.
15. Through Dr. Silvestere De Costa, Harp 1822  
instrument was purchased for which he was S.M.M.T.  
given 200 **puli** varahas. MS-5,P.39
16. The expenditure incurred for purchasing 1807, BN.144(C)  
instruments and books on western music M.S.-7-P. 1  
from Mr. Hebbler was 64 varahas.
17. Purchase of European instruments from 1803,BN- 137(C)  
Madras and the expenditure incurred M.S. 13 - P.1  
thereof.
18. Purchase of European instruments and 1801, 301(C)  
**strings**. M.S.407,P.75
19. Requisition for leave for 20 days by 1820,  
an actor Hussain Khan (who was famous BN-162(C),  
for female roles in the dance dramas) MS-15,  
for the purpose of visiting Trichi. P.6

20. Permission granted for leave to **Bhagavatamēḷa**'s singer **Annāsvāmi** Vaidyanathagudi. 1802, BN-302(C) MS.5
21. Permission granted to **Sāraṅgi** players Kuppusvamayya & Gopalayya to carry the instruments through the royal gate. 1841; BN-169(C) MS-43, P.1
22. Punishment given to six members of the **Bhāgavatamēla** troupe, who had earlier consented to participate in the Navaratri celebrations and later absented for which they were accountable to the supervisors **Rāmāji Krsnan** and Nagoji and had to pay a **fine** of 2 coconuts each. The names of the members are as follows:- 1813, BN-116 (c) P.26
- (1) **Veṅkata** Ramayya  
 (2) Gurumurthy Gopalam  
 (3) **Srinivāsan** Gopalan  
 (4) Muthayya anna  
 (5) Subba Vaidyanathan and  
 (6) Ranga Siva Raman.
23. Kuppayya **Adimūṛthy** and **Veṅkatacālam** were asked to remit 5 coconuts each as punishment for refusing to perform their respective roles in the **Bhagavatamēla** nataka which was to be enacted on the occasion of the birthday of minister **Varahapayya Ramasamayya** who was the minister in the court. 1820; BN-162(C) MS-8 P. 1

24. A singer Sundara Ramasvāmayya of  
Bhagavatamela troupe attached to 1819;  
Muktāmbālpuram catram was levied a BN-94  
fine of 18 coconuts for not attending P.30  
his duty regularly.
25. Vikatakavi (Comic & mimic genius in  
Bhagavatamela) Vaidyanatha Lokanathan 1804;  
assured that he would participate in the MS-14  
new nataka that was to be enacted but P.30  
went on leave and did not turn up for the  
occasion for which he was punished with a  
fine of 12 coconuts by the supervisor of the  
Nataka Mallori Nagoji.
26. Devadasi Arigu's daughter Nagu was asked to 1825;  
pay a fine of 1 cakram and 2 panams as her MS-5  
bullock cart happened to cross the British P.8  
Resident's vehicle who had come to see the  
river in floods.
27. Six Hindustani dance teachers in the nataka- 1819;  
śāla submitted a letter as signed contract BN.503  
to the court that they would not undertake  
to teach lessons in Dhrupad, Khayal, Tappa  
(Hindustani musical forms) to outsiders except  
to the Rājadāsis or the dancing girls in the  
court. If found guilty, they shall be punished  
to pay 120 cakrams. The names of the six  
teachers are -

- (1) Bilaval Ali
- (2) Mirzabaker Ali
- (3) **Allauddin**
- (4) Hussain Khan
- (5) Govinda Raj **Rāmji** Bove and
- (6) Govinda Rao Bove

The contract has the seal of Sri **Dharmayya**-  
Ramasamayya.

28. 12 Brahmin music teachers in the **nāṭakaśāla** 1819 A.D.  
were also said to have signed a similar B.N.-503  
contract of not undertaking any teaching  
assignments outside the court. The names  
of these 12 teachers are as follows :-

- (1) Vaidyanatha **Dharmaraja**
- (2) Subramani Ramanada
- (3) **Mattusubha** Mudasami
- (4) Muttukrsna **Gurusvami**
- (5) **Veṅkaṭarāya** Ramasvāmi
- (6) Ananta Subba Vaidinata
- (7) Sivaram Ganapati
- (8) Subramani Subbayya
- (9) Ayyasami Vaidinatha
- (10) **Veṅkaṭarāmayya** Raṅgayya
- (11) Sabhapati Subbayya and
- (12) Visvanatha Pancanadi

29. Likewise 6 Karnatic music teachers also 1819 A.D.  
submitted a letter to the court that new B.N.-503  
kṛti (composition) learnt by them which  
has been performed in the Sangita **mēla**,

would not be taught to anybody without the permission of Sarkar(court). And in case of non-compliance with the contract, they shall pay a fine of 120 cakrams.

The **five** musicians were -

- (1) Balaji **Krsna**
- (2) Pillankuzhal Sesabin **Sitārām**
- (3) **Narāyaṇa** Pinkuni
- (4) Kandu pinkuni
- (5) Kamaksibin **Jambu**
- (6) Muthiah **Veṅkates'.**

30. This particular manuscript refers to the requisition sought by a section of artists from the **Tepperumānallūr** village asking for permission from the court for the enactment of '**Kamsavadha nataka**' on the 9th day of Sn Ramanavami festival in the temple of Lord **Varadaraja** svami and also consider the same as court function. S.M.M.T  
M.S.-5  
P. 16
31. Likewise Vengusvamy of '**Sahānāyakan**' street sought permission to enact '**Valliamman nātakam**' in the sanctum sanctorum of Lord **Khandoba svāmi** temple. S.M.M.T  
M.S.-9  
P.33
32. Dasi **Ramāmani**'s 5 daughters were given 5 **panams** and 2 **kalams** paddy each for every month by the court who in turn were dedicated to **Cidambareśvarar** temple by the palace authorities. 1819  
S.M.M.T.  
MS-6 P.418

33. It is learnt from the manuscripts **that** 1882  
 Dasis married to a particular God in a S.M.M.T  
 temple were transferred to another temple **6-19**  
 In 1882 two dasis **Kuḷivāy** and **Kambalayam**  
 aged 12 and 10, attached to **Kamāksi**  
 temple were transferred to **Brhadiśvarālaya**

## II. Entertainment

1. Several queens and the women in the royal 1842  
 harem were entertained with music & dance BN-622(C)  
 performances in their chambers. This manu- MS-36  
 script refers to the list of western and P. 1  
 Indian musical instruments lent to accompany  
 western and Hindustani dances performed in  
 the establishment '**Krsna** Vila's' of queen  
**Saidambāboi** Saheb.  
 The musical instruments used were -  
 (1) Svarabhat - 2  
 (2) **Sāraṅgi** - 3  
 (3) Violin - 1  
 (4) Sitar - 2  
 (5) Bourban French guitar -1  
 (6) Dulcimer - 1.
2. Queen Parvatiboi were entertained by court 1801  
 dancer Vehkatalaksmi for which she was BN-201(C)  
 remunerated with 2-1/2 **cakrams**. MS-10,P-987
3. **Karnatic** music and dance were performed in 1841;  
 'the chamber 'Vijaya Vilasa Mahal' before the BN-161(C)  
 pregnant queen **Rājasabai Ammāni** Raje Saheb. MS-43,P.2

4. Expenses incurred for the enactment of Mohini Mahes'vara **Pariṇaya** nataka by Bhagavatamela troupe in **Rājamahāl** nagarkhana was 9 cakrams. 1819  
BN-105(C)  
P.99
5. Several artists (dancers and nattuvanars) were invited from Tiruvayyar, Tiruvarur & temples of **Kumbeśvara** (Kumbakonam) and Sarangpani to perform lavani on **Kāman** pandigai or Holi festival. The names and addresses of these artists along with the expenses incurred in maintaining them for a month (1st to 29th of the month of Holi) is inferred from the manuscript. 1811;BN-123 (c)  
P. 14 & 35
6. Sadir performances during the celebrations of Navaratri festival were referred to as Navaratri Sadir. 1807;  
BN-31(C)
7. During Navaratri celebration, wrestling competitions were held and many wrestlers from Thanjavur and Mangalore who participated in it were given 76 cakrams for 20 participants and 12 cakrams for 6 wrestlers. 1807,  
B.N-31(c)
8. For the performance of Sadir during Navaratri **celebrations**, the workers for cleaning and sweeping the Sadir **mādi** or Ratna Sabha maidi were given 2-3/8 **panams**. 1809,  
BN-169(c)  
P. 7
- 9, In view of Navaratri celebration in the court of King **Sivāji-II**, the court dancers and wrestlers were given a total sum of Rs. 170. 1841;BN-114 (c)  
P. 40



Modi Manuscripts pertaining to music are as follows:

S.No.	Particulars	Year & M.S.No.
1.	A musician Jacobai was paid a monthly salary of 4 cakrams under the order and royal seal of Dharmayya Rāmasāmayya.	1820, 162(C) MS-3,P.6
2.	On the demise of musician Ananta Subbayya <b>the</b> department of music paid his monthly salary of 3-1/2 cakrams to his widow.	1830; BN-431(C) P.8
3.	Two women musicians of Sangitamela were given Rs.5 each for their musical concert.	1819; BN-432(C) P.8
4.	Musician Dilwar Ali was given 10 cakrams for repairing the instruments and keeping them in safe place.	1814; BN-85(C)
5.	500 cakrams were given to the persons employed in the court for stitching beautiful covers in silk for varied musical instruments.	1825; BN-108(C) P. 12
6.	At the order issued by Dharmayya Ramasamayya, the Valamburi conch was despatched to Krisnasvami of Maṅgaḷagiri temple.	1820; BN-162(C) MS-25 P. 1
7.	Under the supervision of the Superintendent of Natakasala (Dharmayya Ramasamayya) several musical instruments were repaired. tuned and 7 nagasvarams were given silver plating for which 24-1/2 ser silver was used.	1823 BN-111(C) MS. 10.P-1
8.	Monthly salary of 6 cakrams was paid to <b>the</b> son of Hindustani musician Srinivasa Venkhoji kutti pant.	1802, BN-302(C) MS-5,P. 11

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 9. A composer & poet Kṛṣṇaji Sivaji was paid a monthly salary of Rs.5.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 1843;<br>BN-140(C)              |
| 10. Saṅgīta Vidyadhik Setuannāji and his pupils were given 5-5/16 Cakrams.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 1825;<br>BN-161(C)<br>MS-4,P.1  |
| 11. For the Allah festival, Hindustani musician Gullām Hussain was paid 5 cakrams and 2 panams.                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 1801;<br>BN-301(C)<br>MS-407    |
| 12. Sri Mērusvami was given Rs.306 and 4 annas for the conduct of Sri Ramanavami festival.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 1842;BN.114(C)<br>MS-10, P - 1  |
| 13. Vina Rama Samayya and his brother Laksmana Ayyar, the sons of Mysore Venkataramayyar were remunerated for giving musical concert.                                                                                                                                                                      | 1813,<br>S.M.M.T<br>MS-2 - P.22 |
| 14. Palamputta Bhūṭgosvāmi, father of famous Balasarasvati Jagannatha (The appellation- Balasarasvati was given for his proficiency in playing on the instrument 'Balasarasvati' also called as Mayuri and taus in persian language), court musician was given 5 ullages as Sarvamānya by King Serfoji-II. | 1814;<br>S.M.M.T.<br>MS-1,P.28  |
| 15. Among the musicians who came from other regions to Tanjore and performed in the court, were Kalyan Singh. Dirdar Ali and Lakhā Ram of Gwalior.                                                                                                                                                         | S.M.M.T<br>MS-1, P.317          |
| 16. Purchase of European instruments and strings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 1801;BN.301(C)<br>MS-4047, P-5  |

17. Requisition by musician Ramasvāmi to go to **Palani**. 1802;BN-302(C)  
MS-5,P.16
18. Sanction of leave to Hindustani musician Mir **Rehman** to visit Nagūr in order to fulfill a vow. 1811,BN.142(C)  
MS-17, P- 9
19. Varahappayya, a **Senādhurandhura** during the reign of Śivāji-II was asked to pay a fine of Re.1 and 5-1/2 **panams** for refusing to learn Hindustani music from Umarkhan **Mirkhan**. In addition to this he had to remit a sum of Rs.120, for his inability to prepare himself, within the stipulated period, to play on four musical instruments and perform in front of the King. 1836;  
BN-57(C)  
MS-8,P - 7
20. At the mention of Dharmayya Ramasāmayya's intention of visiting Tiruvaṛṇyār, the King is said to have arranged for his trip with royal honours. 1813, BN.116  
P.27
21. A North Indian Brahmin who was stationed in Varahappayya's house was given Rs.2 for writing a book on Karnatic music. 1829,BN.165(C)  
MS-32, P - 1
22. Requisition given to the Dept. of music to send musician Laksmāna Gosayī and his troupe to perform at the house of Sadas'iv Kēsav Pandit at 2 P.M. The latter was a minister to King Sivaji-II. 1843, S.M.M.T.  
MS-2, P - 220

Thus the modi records demonstrate the effective organisation of music and dance with clearly formulated procedures and well worked out strategies pertaining to dancers and musicians. The administrative set-up as illustrated above, clearly manifests that discipline was uniformly enforced without any consideration by King Serfoji-II. It is quite interesting to note that the payment of regular salaries, providing facilities like sanctioning of leave, payment of advances for the festivals and other occasions and gifting of Sarvamanya lands to the artists, had made them to consider music and dance as their profession. We have plethora of evidence from these manuscripts that equal importance was given to classical as well as populist art forms. Organisation of frequent wrestling bouts, in the palace by inviting wrestlers from neighbouring places and arranging dance and musical performances in the court and such other multifarious artistic activities only speak of the Kings unstinted love and bountiful patronage to arts and literature which must have surely provided a sense of satisfaction to all the sections of the society during his reign.

Hence the analogy "Recognition of talent is to art what sunshine is to flowers" holds good in the case of King Serfoji-II who was a dynamo, galvanising the entire artistic world of Tanjore during his period.

## CHAPTER - III

### DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUE AND FORMAT OF SADIR

The integral beauty of Sadir, presently known as Bharatanatyam can be better understood and appreciated, if one attempts to analyse its component parts- Nr̥tta (pure or abstract dance), Nr̥tya (representational dance), Abhinaya (expressive dance) which as individual entities and in creative fusion with one another have resulted in establishing a fine inimitable style of its own.

The researcher, in the present chapter, proposes to deal with the following aspects which highlight the technique and format of Sadir-

- (1) Technique - Drawing a comparison of the adavu system as mentioned in Saṅgita Saramrta of King Tulaja-I with the current practising tradition of Bharatanatyam.
- (2) Analytical study of the Nirupana format.
- (3) The format of Sadir systematised by Tanjore Quartette.
- (4) A comparative study of the Nirupana and the present day format of Bharatanatyam.

I. The technique of Nr̥tta for any classical dance rests on the sturdy base of the adavus. An Adavu is defined as "the basic rhythmic unit of dance within a specific tempo and time structure that involves composite movements pertaining to Nr̥tta<sup>(1)</sup>"

We find the reference of the term 'adavu' mentioned in the Tamil classic 'kūttanūl'<sup>(2)</sup> and in the medieval work 'Bharataseṇāpatīyam'<sup>(3)</sup> too.

- (1) Dr.Kanak Rle - Ed. - Hand book of Indian classical dance Terminology - Nalanda dance research centre - Bombay - 1992 - P.34.
- (2) Cf. Dr. Padmasubrahmanvam - 'Dance Notation of Adavus'; Bharatanatyam - Indian classical dance art. Ed., by Sunil Kothari. Marg Publications - Bombay - 1979 - P.35
- (3) **Ibid**

We do not find the mention of the term 'adavu' in the Nāṭya Sastra of sage Bharata. But the work defines the combined "simultaneous movements of hands and feet while dancing as Karanas" <sup>(1)</sup>.

Hasta pada samāyōgāhā

Nṛtyasya **karanam** bhavet

The Karanas according to Nāṭya sastra are 108 in number and are evolved out of the combination of the three elements-Sthanas (specific posture); Cāris (the cumulative movement of the feet, shanks, thighs and hips) and Nṛttahastas (Hand gestures employed in pure dance). But it would be interesting to note that all these three elements mentioned above are incorporated in the execution of an adavu too.

A śloka from Saṅgita muktavali states that these karanas are called as 'atu' by the artists of Andhra region and other provinces who are experts in the triple arts of vocal music, Instrumental music and dancing.

Etani Karananyahu 'atu' sabdena loukikah!

**Natā āndhrādidēśasthāḥ** touryatrikavicaksanāḥ!! <sup>(2)</sup>.

Yet, there seems to be slight differences between the adavu system current in the present practising tradition of Bharatanatyam and the karanas mentioned in the sastra.\* Unlike the other treatises on dance, the dance chapter - 'Nṛttaprakaraṇam' of Saṅgita Sārāmrta<sup>(3)</sup>, an 18th century

(1) A board of Scholars - Translation into English - The Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata Muni - Sri Satguru Publications, Delhi, P.34

(2) Cf. Dr. V.Raghavan - Bharatanatya, The journal of the Music Academy, Madras. Vol.XLV. P.251. This sloka is not found in the Saṅgita **Muktavali** edited and published in 1991 by The Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur.

(3) Pandit S.Subrahmanya Sāstri - The Saṅgita Sārāmrta of King Tulaja of Tanjore: The Music Academy Publication - Madras. 1942.

\* Dr.R.Satyanārāyaṇa, an eminent scholar in the field of Music and Dance, observes some slight differences between an Adavu and Karanam in his book-Bharatanatya- A Critical Study . in Varalaksmi Academy of Music and Fine Arts Publication. Mysore. 1968. P.138.

treatise on the science of music authored by the Maratha King Tulaja-I, has a separate section apportioned called 'Sramavidhi' which deals with the practice of the adavus which is more or less similar to the oral tradition of the Sadir -Bharatanaryam dance. This valuable section also gives "the Sanskrit names with their Tamil and Telugu equivalents' notably of the varieties of foot-beats"<sup>(1)</sup> referred to in Sanskrit as 'Pādakuttanam' which is popularly known as 'adavu' in the practising tradition of the art. In this direction, it is to be noted that most of the technical terms involved in the present oral tradition of the art form are of South Indian in origin.

The adavu system followed by the oral tradition of Sadir - Bharatanatyam has nearly 13-15 adavu groups with each group having minimum of 4-6 variants, all performed at three speeds, the second speed and the third speed doubling and quadrupling the first speed respectively. It is learnt that the adavus as practiced today have been systematised by Tanjore Quartette during the period of King Serfoji-II<sup>(2)</sup>. Some schools practice only 13 adavus, while others identify 15 such groups.

Except for the change in the nomenclature of the adavu groups from school to school most of the adavus and their prescribed variants remain almost same with regard to its performance details.

The names of some of the adavu groups popular in usage are as follows:

- |                             |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Tattadavu                | 8. Tirmānam adavu  |
| 2. Nāttadavu                | 9. Periyadavu      |
| 3. Pakkadavu                | 10. Tattimettadavu |
| 4. Kuttadavu or<br>Ettadavu | 11. Mandi adavu    |
| 5. Kudiccu mettadavu        | 12. Veeṣi adavu    |
| 6. Sarukkal adavu           | 13. Simiradavu     |
| 7. Suttral adavu            | 14. Meyadavu       |
|                             | 15. Paiccal adavu  |

(1) Dr. V.Raghavan - Introduction - Sāṅgita Sāmrata of King Tulaja, The Music Academy Publication - Madras - P XXIII.

(2) Interview with Sri.K.P.Kitappa pillai on 28-4-94, Thanjavur.

The different groups of adavus are identified by the practitioners of the art basing on two aspects:-

1. The execution of **adavus** performed to the Sollukattu or rhythmic mnemonics such as 'Tattaitaha', 'Dhititai' and so on.
2. The second one deals with the manner of execution of the adavus with regard to its functional or operational point of view, i.e., according to the type of body and foot movements and floor-contacts employed in covering the space either diagonally, sideways, backwards, through whirling, sliding or aerial movements. For example -

(1) The pakkadavu : The term 'pakka' meaning side involves the movement of the body either sideways or diagonally towards the corners.

(2) Suttral Adavu : The Tamil word 'Suttral' means circular or to swirl. The body in this adavu swirls round with the help of one foot while the other rests on the ground, balancing the body.

(3) Mevadavu : The term 'mey' in Tamil refers to body and this adavu involves the graceful movements of the major and minor limbs of the body. Meyadavus are usually employed at the preliminary section of the dance numbers such as Jatisvaram and Tillānā.

(4) Paiccal adavu : The term 'pāiccal' in Tamil means leaping. This adavu involves leaping movements of the body, covering space either to the sides or front with horizontal or through vertical jumps.

Maintaining the basic motif of the **adavu** group, elaborations or variations in movements are created which are performed to the recitation of specific rhythmic mnemonic syllables assigned to the adavu group. Most of the adavus are executed symmetrically in a balanced juxtaposition of the movements to the right and left.



All these categories are once again subjected to multiple rhythmic patterns conceived through various permutations and combinations of hand and foot movements, thus supplementing the pure dance (Nr̥tta) of **Bharatanatyam** with amazing variety of simple to complex rhythmic dance sequences called 'Jatis'.

Interestingly, except a few, majority of the adavus are performed in the Ardha mandali position - the basic stance of this art form in which the torso is held erect with the legs bent at the knees and feet are flexed sideways, horizontally in a line with a distance of one span between the heels. This basic stance in Tamil is referred to as Araimandi, literally meaning the half-sitting posture. Obviously this basic stance is quite familiar and common to many other classical dance styles of India.

In order to analyse the Siksambha (initial training) and the 'Srama Vidhi' or the method of practising of the different adavu groups mentioned in the treatise 'Sangita Saramrta', a comparative study of correlating the present practising tradition of the adavus with its textual interpretation would assume greater significance. In this context, it would be imperative to familiarise with different positions of the feet and hand gestures involved in the execution of adavus.

The definitions of some of the feet positions are as follows:-

(1) Sama:- The foot which rests on the ground naturally is called **Sama**. When stationary, it shows the natural state; when moving it indicates moving around.

(2) Añcita:- When the heels are on the ground the balls of the feet raised upwards and the toes outstretched, is **Añcita**.

- (3) Kuncita:- When the toes are bent, the heels raised and the arch bent pose is Kuncita.
- (4) Agratāla Samcara:- When the heel is raised up, the big toe stretched, and the other toe curved down, the foot is called Agratāla Samcara.
- (5) Udghattita:- Standing on the balls of the feet and bringing the heel down to the ground, once or more is Udghattita.
- (6) Mardita:- That pose is Mardita, in which the sole rubs against the ground crosswise.

Some of the hand gestures employed in the adavus:-

- (1) Pataka:- When the thumb is bent, touching the root of the forefinger, the palm and the fingers are outstretched, the fingers pressed against one another, it is **Patāka**.
- (2) Tripataka :-From Patakahasta, if the ring finger is bent,it is Tripataka.
- (3) Sikhara :-When the finger-tips rest completely in the middle of the palm, and only the thumb points upwards it becomes Sikhara.
- (4) Khatakāmukha :-When the tip of the thumb, forefinger and middle finger are in contact with each other and the ring finger and the little finger are stretched, the hasta is Khatakamukha.
- (5) Alapadma:- When the fingers stand sidewise along the palm, it is Alapadma.
- (6) Mrgasīrṣa :When the fore finger, middle and ring finger are stretched and bent from the pataka position, the hasta is called mrgasīrṣahasta.
- (7) Dola : When pataka hands hang freely so as to reach the thighs, it is **Dola-Hasta**.

These definitions of **feet** positions are based on the treatise - **Saṅgitaratnākara**.

According to Sangita Saramrta the method adopted for learning these adavus, begins in the **Araimandi** position with the student holding the centre of a rod or **dandika**, placed horizontally at the chest level supported by two vertical poles in front of the dancer. This practice of holding dandika is referred to in Sanskrit as Dandika Grahana. **Sāmu** in Telugu connotes the exercise with the stick and its Tamil equivalence is Salambam or **Salambam** Pidithal, meaning holding the rod. As this tradition was in vogue during the Maratha period, it would be worthwhile to revive it in its old form, to ensure the balancing of the body with correct posturing and perfection of the basic stance **Ardhamandali**, for the beginners.

The following is the description of the various adavu groups mentioned in the treatise "Sangita Saramrta" along with its corresponding adavu group practised in the oral tradition.

1. **Samakuttanam - Tattadavu**

Suddhamandalamasthaya Theyyatheyyeti **pāṭakaiḥ**  
 Padabhyam kuttanam **bhūmou** bhavet Tattadavahvayam||  
 Bhavettat Samakuttanam |  
**Sollu** - Theyyathai

Adopting Suddhamandala\* position and striking the ground with Samapada (on its sole) to the accompaniment of the rhythmic mnemonics "Theyyathai" is called Tattadavu or Samakuttanam. Such a sequential stamping is to be repeated by increasing the speed i.e., in all the three speeds **Vilambita** (slow), **Madhya** (medium) and **Druta** (fast).

**The** description of Suddhamandala given by Tulaja in the same chapter, more or less corresponds to the half sitting posture with the knees bent and the hand placed on the waist and looking straight in one line (**Samadr̥ṣṭi**)

Tattadavu :-The term 'tatta'<sup>1</sup> means to strike or hit. In this adavu with the body positioned in the Ardhamandali or Araimandi stance, the feet are made to stamp on the floor with the sole alternately, starting with the right foot first. This process is to be repeated in three speeds set to rhythmic time structure. The s'ollu used is Theyya thai. Hence this "Tatta adavu" conforms with the textual interpretation of Samakuttanam.

## 2. Khanatpada kuttanam - Kuttadavu

Nikhāya Parsnimekaikam Prthakpādēna tādānam

Sapataka karānvitam syat Khanat Pādakuttanam (kuttadavu).

Holding patakahasta in both the hands the heel of one foot is placed on the ground with the balls of the foot raised upwards as in Ancita pada; the other foot in Sama pada is made to strike the ground with its sole. This is referred to as Khanatpada kuttanam or Kuttadavu. The Sollu for this adavu has not been mentioned in the treatise. The term Khutta\* in Bharatārnavam of Nandikeśvara is defined as the 'stamping of the ground with the forefoot' <sup>(1)</sup>. The description of this adavu does not coincide with the Kuttadavu of the practising tradition on the other hand it seems to be part of the next ensuing category of adavu called Nattadavu.

The terms 'Kutta and Etta' means striking and stretching respectively. As per the practising tradition, this adavu rightly involves the beautiful hand **extensions**(Etta) pointing(Kutta) either horizontally towards sides or diagonally towards the corners. This adavu is performed in the Ardhamandali posture, wherein the feet in Sama position are made to stamp the ground alternately with its sole and with a slight jump on

\* The term Khutta, according to San̄gita ratriakara has been defined as striking the ground with the tip of the foot. Kuttadavu is identified as Ettadavu by some schools.

(1) K. Vasudeva Sāstri - Ed., - Bharatarnava of Nandikesvara - T.S.M. Series No. 74; T.M.S.S.M. Library, Thanjavur- 1989 - P. 152.

the toes, the weight of the body is balanced on the toes of both the feet and the right foot from Agratala position, is made to strike the ground with its sole in Samapada. This sequence is next repeated, starting with the left foot. This **adavu** is performed to the mnemonics Thattai taha dhittai taha. There are nearly 6-8 variations in this category and the hand gesture employed for these variations is usually tripatakahasta. The rhythmic variations of this **adavu** can mostly be seen in the simple as well as complicated dance numbers of Bharatanatyam i.e., in Alarippu as well as in the **Varnam**.

Hence the description of the Khanatpadakuttanam as given in the treatise does not coincide with the **kuttadavu** of the practising tradition, rather it seems to be a part of the next ensuing **adavu** called “Nāttitattadavu”.

### 3. Pāśvakuttanam; Pascatkuttanam - Nāttitattadavu

Niksipyā Parsnipādābhyām tripatakakaranvitam|  
 Tadanam bhuvi yattat syat Nāttitattadavāhvayam ||  
 ParsVakuttanam Samjnakam ||  
 Kriyateyadi tatpāścādūdhā—————  
**Kuttanam** laksya tattvajñāih  
**Pāścātkuttanam**īritam || Poragha(?) Nattitattadavu ||  
 Puratah Parsvatah Pas'cat Pādakuttana bhedatah |  
 Tatravantara bhedassyuh kara vyāpāra saṃyutāḥ ||  
 Sollu - Thai ta thaiyyā

When the foot is thrust sideways, striking the ground with the heel as in **Añcita**, employing **Tripatākahasta**, the **adavu** is known as **ParsVakuttanam**. It is called as **Pascatkuttanam** by scholars, when the (**kuncita**) foot is made to strike the ground backwards. Both the **adavu** variations are referred to as **Natti tattadavu**. The **sollu** used is “**Thaita** thaiyya”. There

can be as many variations of this adavu category based on variety of foot strokes, either forward, sideways and backwards, accompanied by different movements of the hands.

This adavu according to practising tradition is known as Nattadavu. The term Nattu means stretch and implant. From the basic **stance-Araimandi**, if the right leg with Ancita foot is extended either sideways or forward to strike the floor with its heel as in Ghattita and then bringing it back to its original position by stamping the floor with its sole on samapada is called Nattadavu and the same movement, is to be repeated with **the left foot** too.

The **Sōllu** used in practising tradition is

"Thai Yum tat tat thai yum tāhā".

Likewise, the manifold ways of leg extensions either towards front, sideways and backwards will result in as many variations of Nattadavu. In total, there are eight such variations which are generally practised under this category.

Except for the slight change in the rhythmic mnemonics, the adavu complies with the description mentioned in the treatise.

4. Pādapārśvakuttanam-Dhitithai adavu.

Kuttanam Pādapārśvābhyām dhitithai śabdapūrvakam |

Sacakravartanam Pādapārśva Kuttanamīritam

Tatsyat Dhitithai Kuttanāhvayam ||

Atra Padapracara tnpataka kara Karmatah ||

Utpadyante—————bheda lakṣyajna sammatah ||

**Sōllu** - Dhi ti thai

The process in which the **side(Pārśva)** of the foot is made to strike the ground to the accompaniment of the rhythmic sounding of the mnemonic

"dhitithai" and when repeated with the other foot alternately in quick succession, the adavu is called as Pada Pārśva Kuttanam or Dhitithai adavu. The hands employing Tripatākahasta, with different movements of the feet, many variations of this adavu group can be created. Such variations have been recognised and approved by scholars in the field of dancing.

This adavu in the present day practice is performed in the Araimandi position by placing the right foot in the Ancita position either sideways or towards front while the left foot which is in its natural or Sama position (squared obliquely) is made to strike the ground on its sole following which the right foot (Ancita) is brought back to the original position. This adavu is used generally in the concluding portion of the dance sequences called 'Tirmānam' performed, to the Sollukattu - 'Thadiginatom' or Kitatakatarikitatom by using Tripataka hasta or combination of Pataka - Khatakāmukha - Alapadmahastas respectively.

This adavu is in close conformity with the textual interpretation except for slight modification with regard to the placement of the foot which is to be placed on its heel(parsni), unlike on its sides(parsva) as mentioned in the treatise.

5. Digidigikuttanam - Digidigi adavu - Kovvaradavu

Sthitvardhamandale bhūmou pādāgracalanātmakam

Sakarāvartanam Proktam digidigyādikuttanam ||

Karapādapracā—————|

-matah

(digi digi adavu) (Kovvaradavu)

Kecit kuttanabhedah syustattattālaprabhedatṛṇ

**Sollu** - dig dig dig dig thai thaiyya

dig dig dig dig thai thaiyya

This adavu is also mentioned as Koyyaradavu. The term 'koyyaradu' in Tamil means plucking. Maintaining the body in the **Ardhamandali**, the feet (in Kuncita) is made to move in Agratala Sancara alongwith the circular movement of the hands. The sollu given for the adavu is dig-dig-dig-dig-thai thaiyya. The treatise further states that different types of this adavu can be improvised depending upon the variations in **tāla**. This adavu is not in vogue in the present day practising tradition of **Bharatanatyam** yet an **adavu** almost similar to the one described above is prevalent in the Kuchipudi dance style.

6. Utplutvotthanam-Kudicca ezhumburadu.

Utplutya bhūmāvutthānam Karapldapracaravat

Mandalam purvavacca . . . . . Samjñitam || Iti utplutyottaham j

Sollu - Thai tatt tatt **thā** - thaita dhittām.

Getting up from the **muzhumandi\*** position with a slight jump, accompanied by the movement of the hand, is known as **Utplutyotthānam**. The mnemonics used are Thai tatt tatt **thā** - thaita **dhittām**. The text further mentions the possibility of many variations of this adavu group. The description of the adavu in the treatise seems to be insufficient and though this adavu does not exactly synchronise with the Mandi adavu of **Bharatanatyam**, it partially resembles with some of the variations involved in the Mandi adavu. The term Mandi means knees. In this adavu, the body positioned in the muzhumandi is slightly raised with

\* Muzhumandi or Kuncita Janu :- From the **Aramandi** position, if the body is still **lowered**, where the thighs and shanks are in contact with each other and the body is held erect, the knees spread out on the sides and the feet are in Agratala **position**. This posture is called Muzhumandi or Kuncita Janu.



a mild jump on the toes and employing Sikhara hasta in both the hands, the right leg is extended sideways obliquely, thereby balancing the weight of the body on the left foot which assumes Sampada consequent upon the leg extension. The right hand is stretched and placed sideways in the direction opposite to the extended right leg. The same procedure is to be repeated with the left leg. This description given is only one variation of this adavu group. When compared to other adavu groups, this category of adavu is quite difficult to execute as it demands the balancing of weight of the entire body alternately on one leg. The Sollu used for the adavu is “Thāṅidu tha tha dhinna” There are several variations of this particular adavu which arise on account of different leg extensions and hand movements.

7. Mardana-Kudiccumettadavu

Atrāpibhedā jayante bahavo laksya samgatah|

utplutya bhūmou pārṣṇibhyām mardanam yatpu—————|  
-mardanakhyānam nātyavedavidoviduḥ||

Sollu :- || Taddhi thai thai Taddhittām tam||

With a mild jump, the ground is hit by the balls of the feet in Agratala position, followed by the heels striking the ground. The repetition of this movement is referred to as mardana by scholars of Nātya Veda. This is also called as Kudiccu mettadavu. The memonics mentioned are Taddhi thaithai Taddhittamtam.

The description of this adavu in the text exactly corresponds to the Kudiccu mettadavu of the present day practising tradition except for the change in the Sollu. The terms Kudiccu and mettu in Tamil means to jump and strike. Maintaining the posture of the body in the Ardhamandali, the feet simultaneously, after a mild jump are made to

stand on its balls and then brought back to strike the ground on its heels. The hand gesture used for the different variations of this adavu group are Alapadma, Katakāmukha&Tripatāka hastas etc.

The Sollu adopted is Taihat-taihi.

8. Santādva Bhramanam

Santadyoddhrtya savyena pādēna bhramanam yatha |

Tathā varena cettatsyat santadyabhramanahvayam ||

Sollu - dhaidha—————||

After striking the right foot, it is lifted and made to swirl round in circular movement and this is to be repeated with the left foot in the similar fashion. This is called Santadya Bhramanam. The Sollu for this adavu is given as dhaidha—————||

This movement is part of Suttral adavu. current in practising tradition of Bharatanatyam. Suttru in Tamil means to swirl or rotate. This adavu involves balancing the weight of the body on one foot, while the other foot is made to swirl round. There are several variations in this adavu group which are performed to the mnemonics "That tai tarn dhit tai tarn".

9. Santādva Pārsni Kuttanam - Tatti mettadavu

Santadya Savyavāmābhyām parsanibhyam kuttanam bhuvi !

Kramācchet santadya pārṣṇikuṭṭanākhyam tatha bhavet ||

|| Santadya pārṣṇikuṭṭanam || (Tattimettadavu)

Sollu-> Thaiyyathai - Thaiyyathai

Stamping the ground with the sole of the foot in Samapāda and later striking the ground once again in udghattita pada, is known as Santadya Parsni Kuttanam. This sequence of stamping and striking is to be repeated with both right and left foot alternately.

The **sollu** used are Thaiyyathai - Thaiyyathai.

The description of this adavu is analogous to the **Tattimettadavu** of the present practising tradition. The terms 'tatti' and 'mettu' refer to stamping and striking. In this **adavu** the body is positioned in **Ardhamandali** posture and one foot stamps the ground on its sole, the same foot strikes the ground, with the heel or the other foot is made to strike the ground with its forepart and heel. This **adavu** can be performed in all the five **jatis** or units of 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 rhythmic beats. **Tattimettadavu** is very often employed in the dance composition 'varnam' of **Bharatanatyam** format.

10. **Mrdusparsāna** or **Anukkura Adavu**.

Sammelya savyavāmāṇāgritābhyām bhuspars'anam kramāt |

drutagatya tadeva syat mrdusparsānasamjñakam ||

|| Anukkura adavu ||

**Sollu** - "Taddhithai Taddhittā-tā" ||

Etani trinyanekani kalpanācitritatvaṁ (tah?) ||

The adavu in which right and left foot are joined to touch the ground alternately in quick succession is called **MrdusparSana** or **Anukkura** adavu. These simple steps serve as props to the dance and as the name (**mrduspars'ana**) suggests they are performed without much exertion.

The **mrduspars'ana** adavu is identified as **Nadai Adavu** current in the **Nr̥tta** of present day 'Bharatanatyam'. The term 'Nadai' means to walk. Hence this adavu involves walking either sideways to the front, backwards or diagonally etc., employing varied hand movements. Owing to its simplicity in execution it is not practiced as in the case of **adavus** belonging to other groups; yet the utility of this adavu can be seen either at the commencement or in between rhythmic dance sequences or as choreographic ornamentation of the pure dance portions. It is at times employed

in Nr̥tya also. Hence, except for the change in the nomenclature of the āḍavu-(mr̥dusparśāna- Anukkuradavu)both the **Laksna** and **Laksya** are in line with each other with regard to this āḍavu group.

#### 11. Karsana or Simir Adavu

Ardhamandalamāsthāya pādābhyām karsanam bhuvi |

Savyapasavyatascetsyat proktam karṣanāhvayam ||

|| **Simira** adavu||

Sollu -> "Thaiyyathai" (Simiradavu)

utplutyadi prabhedena tadbhedah syuranekadha

Kramātpṛa padapārṣṇibhyām karsanam bhuvi pārśvayōh |

Drutādigatyā natyajnaih proktam karsana pādakam ||

||**Kadaśakālu**||.

Sollu -> 'thai-thai-thai-thai

**Karādivya** parabhedattbhedah syuranekadha ||

Adopting the **Ardhamandali** position, the right and left foot are moved along the floor by rubbing against the ground alternately is called **Karsana**. The Sollu is Thaiyvathai. When the same movement is repeated after a jump or **Utplavana** in order to move further by deflecting the body on either sides with an increase in speed is called **KarsanaPāda** or **Kadasakalu**. The mnemonics for **Karṣaṇapādakam** is 'thai thai-thai thai'. There are many varieties possible according to the movement of the hands. Though it is called as **Simiradavu**, its description matches with the **Periyadavu** and partially with **Simiradavu** with respect to the movements of the hands. The term '**Simir**' means to open up. Since the hands in this adavu are thrust away from the body to form a circle, the name **Simir** might have been given to this adavu.

**Periyadavu:-** The term '**Periya**' in Tamil means big. Both the feet in this adavu are closely placed with one foot in **Kuñcita** behind the other

in Samapada. After taking a vertical jump the feet in the above mentioned position are moved in different geometrical patterns, covering extensive space. The alapadma hastas are used and the hands thrown above the head are moved circularly touching the feet. The sollus used are Ta thai thai ta dhi thai tai tā.

12. Svastikam - Tattikattaradu

Padatadanapurva yat janghavyatyasayogatah

Niksipyā bhūmou pādāgrē sthitiḥ svastikamucyātē ||

||Tattikattaradu||.

After striking with one foot, the thighs are crossed and the feet are firmly rooted on the ground in Agratala position (with the fore part touching the ground) placed one behind the other. This is called as Svastikam or tattikattaradu. The Tamil words 'Tatti' and 'Kattaradu' means striking and enclosing respectively. This adavu corresponds to the visaradavu. Visara means to spread. In this adavu, the heel of the right foot is struck on the ground and placed at a distance from the left leg and subsequently the left foot crosses the right foot as in Svastika position. The right foot is then placed on the side of the left foot. The hand and foot movement in this adavu are spread out to form an arc or semi-circular shape.

13. Sāraṇāgati or Pārikkiradavu

Sāraṇāgamanam padbhyām purah pascacca parsvayoh |

Tiryaktaya yattduktam sāraṇāgatināmakam ||

||Parikkira adavu||.

When the feet are slid along the ground in different directions either forward, backward, sideways or diagonally, it is called Saranagati adavu or Parikkiradavu. This adavu concurs with the Sarukkal adavu of the oral tradition.

The Tamil word 'Sarukkal' means to slide. In this adavu, the body is held straight with the feet in Samapāda, the toes pointing towards front. From this position, the right foot is placed away either sideways, front or diagonally, upon which the left foot is made to join the right by sliding towards it and by raising on the heels, the floor is hit by the forepart with a slight jump. A combination of *katakamukha-Alapadma*, *Mrgasirsa-Dola* and *Pataka hastas* are often employed in this category of adavu.

After the description of the various *adavus*, Sangita *Sārāmṛta* gives the definitions of the *Bhramaris*, *Karanas*, *Das'avidha mandalas*, etc.,. The description of the 'motita mandala' given by Tulaja corresponds with one of the variations of the 'Mandiadavu' of the oral tradition. Likewise, the definitions of few *adavus* also seem to be insufficient. However, from the gestalt view it can be said that the nomenclatures of different *adavu* groups and the method of its execution mentioned in this treatise conjure with the *adavus* in the present day practising tradition to a great extent except for minor differences. Yet the *adavu* system said to have been improvised and developed by Tanjore Quartette which is followed in the present oral tradition seems to be more systematic with its graded order of *adavus* ranging from simple to complex groups, each of which assigned to definite rhythmic mnemonic syllables.

## II. An analytical study of the format of Nirupana:-

Until the later half of the 18th century, we find that *Darus* and *Padas* formed the major part of the repertoire of the *Dasi-attam*. A study of the format of *Serfoji's* *Nirupanas*, reveals the incorporation of newly emerged dance forms of the period such as *Varnam* and *Tillana*, in addition to the already existing *Darus* and *Padas*. These dance forms

(varnam, tillana and pada) also figure in the format later **systematised** by Tanjore Quartette, which only indicate the potent influence exercised by the Nirupana format on the Tanjore brothers. In this direction, another important aspect worth mentioning is the close similarity of the format of Nirupana with that of Tanjore Quartette in relation to the sequential order of arrangement of dance numbers. Hence there is a felt need with contextual appropriateness to analyse the format of Nirupana with an illustration as it would highlight the significant features encompassed in the format. As the connotation of the term 'Nirūpana' has already been dealt with in **Chapter-II**, a detailed study of its format with the help of one such Nirupana out of the set of 13 Nirupanas along with the transliteration and paraphrasing of its Sahitya part, is attempted here. In this context, the Nirupana taken up for the study is -

Sakhine Nāyakice Srama Navakasakalaun Saṅghatanōpāyakaranyaci kalpita kathā (Nirūpana)<sup>(1)</sup>

This Nirupana is a monologue of Sakhi acquainting Lord Kṛṣṇa-the nayaka about heroine's love sickness.

The theme of this Nirupana is woven round the unrequited love of the Nāyikā(who is supposedly Radha) and the distress experienced by her **due** to her separation from the Nayaka - Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Nāyikā's confidant, her sakhi acts as a love messenger, who skillfully narrates the untold agony of the Nayika to Lord Kṛṣṇa in order to reunite them and persuades Lord Kṛṣṇa to join his lady love who is anxiously waiting to receive him. This particular Nirupana has been selected for the study on account of the thematic content that centres round the "Vipralamba

(1) A.Krishnaswāmi Mahādick Rao Saheb - Ed., Korvayānche Sāhityāche Jinnas  
T.M.S.S.M.Library,Thanjavur, 1989 - Vol.II.

**Sṛṅgāra**” (the separation of lovers), which is highly facilitating for the exposition of varying shades of Nayika-Nayaka bhavas.

This Nirupana is set to Arabhi raga, Adacau tala (**Misra** capu tala).

The 18 items comprising the Nirupana are as follows:

- |                        |                      |                         |                       |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Jaya Jaya           | 2) <b>Sāranu</b>     | 3) <b>Alārū</b>         | 4) <b>Sollu</b>       |
| 5) <b>Śabda</b>        | 6) <b>Vaṇṇam</b>     | 7) <b>Pada</b>          | 8) <b>Svarajati</b>   |
| 9) <b>AbhinayaPada</b> | 10) <b>Tillānā</b>   | 11) <b>AbhinayaPada</b> | 12) <b>Jakkiṇi</b>    |
| 13) <b>Gita</b>        | 14) <b>Prabandha</b> | 15) <b>Tripata</b>      | 16) <b>Ślokavarna</b> |
| 17) <b>Koutta</b> and  | 18) <b>Maṅgale</b>   |                         |                       |

All the Nirupanas commence with an auspicious beginning, with the benedictory songs "Jaya Jaya" and "Saranu". These songs are akin to the devotional songs called Todaya Maṅgalam, which are quite popular in the South Indian Bhajana Sampradaya. We find 'Tōḍayam' and 'Saranu' figuring as introductory songs in Yakṣagānas “Sacipurandaramu” and "Sati **danasūramu**“ written by King Sāhaji-II. The rendering of these songs is intended to seek the divine grace for the successful completion of the Nirupana.

(1) **Java Java**:- This invocatory song is in praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa, glorifying his majestic deeds. The song consists of three sections namely Pallavi, Anupallavi and carana. The term 'Jaya' which means "Victory or to Hail" appears at the beginning of every verse both in Pallavi and Anupallavi sections. The lyrical lines of Todaya mangalam are also prefixed with the word 'Jaya'. Given below is transliteration and paraphrase of the song Jaya-Jaya

**Rāga** : Arabhi

Tala: Adacau (**Misra** capu)

|| Pallavi ||

Jaya dalita Jara Sandha | Jaya galita bhava bandha ||

**Jaya Tosita** Vibudha | Jaya dayita sadha ||

|| Jaya Jaya ||



॥ **Anu Pallavi** ॥

Jaya Akrura Varada | Jaya hata **natakhēda**

Jaya tanujita Jalada | Jaya bhakta **mōda** |

॥ Jaya Jaya ॥

॥ Carana ॥

Jaya navanitacora | Jaya **gopa** vadhujara ॥

Naya **namita mandāra** | Nata Sivadhara ॥

॥ Jaya Jaya ॥

Pallavi:

Victory to the destroyer of Jarasandha

Victory to Him who alleviates the worldly ties of bondage

Victory to the bestower of happiness to gods and enlightened ones.

Victory to Him one who is ever merciful and compassionate

Anupallavi:

Victory to the Saviour of Akrura

Victory to the redresser of misery and grief of the meek and humble

Victory to the protector of ascetics and one who has control over his body

Victory to the bestower of happiness to the devotees

**Carana:**

Victory to one who is fond of fresh butter

Victory to the lover of Gopis

Bestower of goodness and one who yields to the desires of worthy (one who is approached by anyone for goodness and justice)

One who brings down the ceaseless flow of auspiciousness and good omen (on this earth)

(To that Lord **Krsna**, we hail)

(2) **Saranu** :- This is another dedicatory hymn eulogising the many facets of Lord Krsna. The term '**Saranu**' means supplication or complete surrender. Like, the earlier piece, Saranu also has three sections, **Pallavi**, **Anupallavi** and **Carana**, except that the words Jaya Jaya are replaced by **Saranu** which is found in the beginning of all the verses in the song. The two songs have the rhetorical embellishment 'antyaprasa'.

|| Pallavi ||

Saranu Saranu khagendra **Kētana** |

Saranu Devaki Nandana ||

|| Anupallavi ||

**Saranu** Naradanuta Puratana |

**Saranu** Suravara Vamana ||

|| Saranu **Saranu** ||

Saranu Saranu Pavitra Kirtana |

Saranu Subhakara Cintana ||

|| **Carana** ||

Saranu Gopi Soukhya Vardhana |

Saranu dhṛta Govardhana ||

||Saranu Saranu||

\* .

Pallavi :

Supplication to the flag of Garuda

Supplication to the son of Devaki

Anupallavi :

Supplication to one who is invoked by Narada

Supplication to Vamana (4th incarnation of Lord **Visnu**) the saviour of gods

**Caranam :**

Supplication to the divine whose hymns are also austere

Supplication to the Lord whose thoughts bring auspiciousness and  
righteous thinking

Supplication to the bestower of happiness to the Gopis'

Supplication to Him who lifted the Govardhana mountain

(To that Lord Kṛṣṇa, we supplicate)

It is after these two benedictory songs, that the dancer usually heralds  
the performance platform.

3) **Alārū**:- The term 'Alaru' is a dravidian word which means a flower  
or blossom. Its verbal form refers to blossoming, expand, open up as  
a flower, to shine, rejoice, etc.<sup>(1)</sup> The flowering of the dance commences  
from this short and simple item which introduces the aspect of Sollukattu  
or set of rhythmic mnemonics. The composition has three sections namely  
Tattakara, **Alārū** and Aditya. It starts with one line of tattakara\* or Sollus  
followed by the main section **Alārū** which consists of series of mnemonic  
passages culminating into a short rhythmic finale or **tīrmāṇam** known  
as Aditya. To the recitation of the series of Sollus, the dancer weaves  
movements of simple adavu patterns. The Aditya is understood to be  
performed comparatively to a faster speed than the other sections in the  
composition.

4) **Sollu**:- The word 'Sollu' in dance parlance, connotes rhythmic  
syllables suitable for dance. Unlike the preceding number, the Sollu kattu  
of the present one is not just recited like 'bhols' but are intended to

(1) **Sankara Narāyaṇa** - Telugu - English Dictionary. Asian Educational Services. New  
Delhi, 1986, P.85

\* **Tattakāras** are known as cueing rhythmic syllables that are recited after which the actual jati to  
be performed, takes off.

be musically rendered (in Arabhi raga) as in the case of rhythmic syllables sung in **Tillānā**. The structure of this composition consists of three **caranas** of sollukattus followed by a short jati section all ending with the rhythmic phrase 'Tadhinginatom'. The Yati Nṛtya mentioned in the treatise '**Saṅgita Darpanam**' seems to be the precursor to the 'Sollu' of the Nirupana format. According to '**Saṅgita Darpanam**' of Catura **Dāmōdara**, Yati Nṛtya is defined as 'Dance to the accompaniment of a musical piece composed of solfa syllables of instrumental sounds such as 'Tath **tattathā dādhi**—————ti thai thai thai **thā**'.<sup>(2)</sup>

5) **Sabda**:- The term '**Sabda**' connotes rhythmic dance syllables (Tala Sollukattu). It is also generally referred to as word or sound. In the present context Sabda means the sound produced by the recitation of Sollukattu set to a rhythmic time measure. It is quite an important item in the format as it gives rise to the genesis of the story of the Nirupana which is conveyed through short lyrical passage interspersed between brief Sollukattus referred to as Sabda. This item concludes with a short tirmanam. Hence the item consists of both words as well as rhythmic sounding mnemonics, well justifying its nomenclature.

The Sahitya or lyrical passage of the dance number Sabda is as follows :-

|| Sahitya ||  
 Bahut divasaci bhetē Gopala ||  
 Visaralasa janu **majalā** ||  
**Namana** karṣṇi **tujalā** ||  
 Mi Prarthite **tujyā dayelā** ||

(1) **K. Vāsudeva Sāstri**, Ed., '**Saṅgita Darpanam of Catura Dāmōdara**' T.S.M Series No.34, T.M.S.S.M. Library. Thanjavur, 1952, P.207 - Sl.131-134.

Here the Nayika's friend (sakhi) converses with Lord Kṛṣṇa and says that since a long time they have not met and so she has been forgotten by Gopala. By paying obeisance to him, she prays for his mercy to shower on her.

6) **Varnam**:- This is considered to be an expansive item in the Nirūpana format. It gives much scope for continuing the narrative forward. The structure of Serfoji's varnam consists of Pallavi and Anupallavi followed by a svara passage and its corresponding Sahitya which are generally referred to as 'citta' or muktayi svara and Sahitya. The concluding section, comprises a line of Sahitya known as 'ettugada Pallavi' followed by five **alternate** svara and Sahitya passages. Though Serfoji has uniformly used the terms svara & Sahitya for the different sections of the varnam, they are quite characteristic of the frame work of the traditional pada **varnams**.

|| Pallavi ||

Je tuji prana Nayaki || Tiyece Mi jāṇa Sakhi

|| Anupallavi ||

Kṛṣṇa aika he hitaguja || Sāṅgāyāṣi ale tuja ||

|| Sahitya ||

Far he Navala | Vāṭate maja ki | Tē tarīdisē |

Jagi far | Katinaṣī tarihi | Maja kale Sakala |

Sarala jinasa | Tica Samaja ||

|| Far te Najuka putalī ||

(1) He Janasa **mani** | Tauke Sakala |

Sina na Sahe tija **manauni** ||

(2) **Sahajamani** | **Jari** atavi | unasa | Tari

talamali | bahutaci pan ||

(3) Parise adhika | **Vacanāṣi** Jari ||

**Camake nijahrdayi** bahuta ||

(4) Esasi sakhi | Hari Hari bahutaci | Tuja viraha ||

(5) Kusamahi | tijala | Salatase | Hari na ruce |

SuvasanaHT sramate | bahute | Tujavina ki ||

In this composition, the sakhi describes to the Nayaka the distressful state of the Nāyikā.

Pallavi :- "Please remember that I am the confidant and intimate friend of your most beloved Nayika who is craving for your company".

Anupallavi :- "I have come to reveal an important secret to you now and I request you to listen to it carefully".

(Muktāyi)Sāhitya :- "It is highly surprising and quite strange to see your indifference towards your beloved. Being Omnipotent and Omniscient, it is perplexing and difficult to comprehend that you are unaware of the restlessness experienced by your dear and delicate dame. I understand that, to obtain your response(grace) in this world is quite difficult, yet your beloved is an unpretentious and innocent girl. (Hence return to her soon.)

(Ettugada Pallavi) :- She is extremely a delicate dame.

Sahitya (1) The enormity and intensity of her passion has become patent for one and all.

Sāhitya (2) The nayika when lost in your thoughts, becomes disturbed and mortified as you have distanced Yourself from her.

Sāhitya (3) I shall tell you more about her pitiable plight. When she hears anything about you, it pierces her heart and puts her to unrest.

Sahitya (4)&(5) 'Hari' is the only name on her lips and she is unable to endure the pangs of separation, due to which even delicate blossoms

do not soothe her, on the contrary, prick her and its fragrance aggravates her tormenting condition. Hence, Oh! Lord Kṛṣṇa, do not keep away from your beloved as your presence would make all the difference and is sure to comfort her.

(7) Pada :- This being an abhinaya oriented item, it provides immense scope for the dancer to exhibit her histrionic talents to the best of her abilities.

A noteworthy feature of the **Nirūpaṇa** format is the inclusion of three such abhinaya pieces, the one that succeeds **varṇam** is called 'pada' and the other two which figure after Svarajati and Tillana are referred to as 'Abhinaya pada'. The only differentiating aspect between a pada and abhinayapada in the Nirupana is the presence of svara passage in the text of the pada. In addition to the regular sections Pallavi, Anupallavi and Carana, the composition strikes a novel feature by adopting few lines of svara. Because of the inclusion of the brief **Solfa** passage in the composition, certain padas of Nirupanas are sometimes referred to in the manuscripts as svarapada. On the other hand, svarapada or svaraksarapada has entirely a different connotation. It is a composition in which the Solfa notes of the **rāga** of the said composition, become the syllables or words of the lyric and their arrangement with the alphabets conveys a definite meaning.

The pallavi and anupallavi is ensued by the svara passage which is followed by a Carana Sahitya of 4 lines.

## **II Pada ||**

Pallavi:- **Ugavata** Candra ratri |

Tape **talamalite** ati ||

Anupallavi:- **Chidaka** karinta **panyaca** |

Curka **mani** thinagyaca ||

Carana :- Hari nija ramana anadara  
 kari jari tari Sudatici Kavana gati ||  
 Gandha Lavitanci hāti |  
 tātākālate pave bhrānti ||  
 Far ahe te victra | tari aika itkematra ||

The Sakhi explains to the Nayaka, Lord Kṛṣṇa, about the miserable condition of the Nayika.

**Pallavi:-** Even the cool rising moon(light) scorches this beautiful dame (Nayika) who is reeling in grief on account of your separation from her.

**Anupallavi:-** When drops of water are sprinkled on her, she feels extremely painful as if sparks of fire are thrown off at her.

Carana :- If Lord Hari, her own lover is going to continue with such unconcerned and uncaring attitude towards his beloved, then what will be the state of the Nayika endowed with beautiful teeth. The heat produced due to her afflictions seems to eclipse the power of the Sandal paste applied on her body which causes hallucination and her behaviour appears to be strange. Likewise I have much more to tell you about the nayika, so please listen to it.

(8) **Svarajati:-**The Svarajatis are akin to the structural format of the varnams, in the Nirupanas except for the absence of Pallavi and Anupallavi sections. Generally, the Svarajatis of the Nirupana format have 4 to 6 passages of alternating Svara and Sahitya passages. The present Svarajati has six such Svara passages each of which is followed by a corresponding Sahitya portion.

|| Svarajati ||

(1) Sahitya :- Tuje rupaca hrdayanta jadale tijaśi Hari |



- (2) Harite **gamate** jadakari Nirakhuni |  
Bahutaci andhakara dithi ||
- (3) Mani **camaka nadharūni** Kṛṣṇa Sāmpa  
Nirakhuni kara pasari tu **manuni** ||
- (4) Sakala **munijana** bahuta kathin tapa  
Kariti Hari tuja nirakhu manuni ||
- (5) Parisa **maga** navala kiti he tari yadupati  
Hari tava **raṁanīca** nija ||
- (6) Sakala Visarataci Samajuni atavi nija  
hrdayi **tulāca** Hari ||

- (1) Oh! Lord Hari, she has enshrined you in her heart. (She has imprinted and engraved in her, the sweet memories relating to you).
- (2) Her mind is loaded and stored up with your thoughts so much so that, even on hearing the footsteps of the pedestrians (pass'ers-by) she at once gets up and with keen eyes looks out, desiring it to be, you. Alas! not finding you anywhere there, the nayika is thoroughly disappointed and her heart is filled with sorrow and remorse.
- (3) But by recollecting the sweet and happy reminiscences of the past (lovemaking), she is overwhelmed with joy and while engrossed in such thoughts, your nayika is unaware of her surroundings and her actions become bereft of reasoning, to the extent that she stretches her hand forward to behold a black cobra, mistaking it to be you. (Here the colour of the snake (kṛṣṇasamp) is indicative of the complexion of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the **sāhitya** bespeaks of the Nāyikā's unalloyed and intensified

feelings of love for the Lord as she identifies Kṛṣṇa in animate and inanimate objects).

(4) All the sages perform hard penance in order to have the vision of Your divine form.

(5&6) It is surprising and strange, yet Oh! Yadupati listen to me, (Hari) you are the subject of her thoughts and every act of hers reflects her yearning to unite with you. She has forgotten everything and does not attach importance to material things. Her heart is filled with your thoughts; such is her love sickness, so have mercy on her and return to her at once.

(9) Abhinava pada:-

The abhinaya padas of the Nirupana format exactly conform with the traditional **padams** with regard to its component sections - Pallavi, Anupallavi followed by 2-3 caranas. Padams in general are pregnant with **Sṛṅgāra** rasa depicting the theme of love and different shades of the **Nāyikā-Nāyaka bhāvas**. But the Abhinaya padas of the **Nirūpanas** are not purely **Sṛṅgāra** based as they project philosophical and devotional themes also. The thematic content of Padas and Abhinayapadas varies depending upon the nature of the story line and the contextual appropriateness of the composition with regard to that particular Nirupana. For example, the 'Dandanithi Nirūpana' centres round the conversation between Lord Rama and Hanuman regarding the norms to be followed for punishing the enemies at war.

In the Abhinaya pada of this **Nirūpana**, Lord **Rāmā** advises Hanuman and cautions him of the treacherous Ravana's cruel thinking and actions. Yet, the present Abhinaya pada taken for illustration, is replete with **Vipralambha Sṛngara** and the theme gets further developed as the sakhi

expresses to Lord Kṛṣṇa the anguish and love pangs experienced by his beloved.

॥ Pallavi ॥

**Manatūje pāyī** jadale | **dolārūpathasāvalē**

॥ Anupallavi ॥

Jikade Tikade Pahe **tujalā** | tujavina na kale tijala

॥ **Caranam** ॥

- (1) Trna halatanci baheri | Uthōni baise śējēvarī |  
Rokha lāuniyā dvari | Padara ghetē Sirāvari ||
- (2) **Ani tice srama** pahuna | konetari vyasane |  
**Kṛṣṇa mahantā** houni **dangā** | puse kothe ahe Sanga ||
- (3) **Vārmvāra** Sangu Kiti | mānite te far khanti  
Tijavari **Kṛpā** kari Sarabhendracā Kaivari ||

Pallavi :-

The nayika has supplicated and surrendered herself at Your feet and her eyes mirror your image.

Anupallavi:-

Wherever she glances, there she finds you. Without You nothing pleases her, she doesn't find a recourse. (The poetic style is lucid and understandable when Serfoji-II uses the words Jikade-Tikade; which mean here and there.)

**Carana (1)**

When a blade of grass moves, expecting it to be the sound produced by your footsteps she at once gets up from the bed and covering her head with the saree looks out at the door step.

**Carana: (2)**

Looking at her maddening actions and love sickness, it is obvious for anybody to comment that she has been addicted

to Kṛṣṇa (Kṛṣṇa's love). But the very mention of his name by the people, she, out of exciting confusedness creates mess of the things around her and eagerly questions as to where her Lord is.

Caranam (3)

Oh! Lord how often should I explain the miserable plight and the untold agony experienced by the Nāyikā. Hence, Oh! Lord, the protector of Sarabhendra please be compassionate and show mercy on her and ameliorate the nayika from her sufferings.

(10) Tillānā -

The term 'Tillānā' derives its name from Hindustani musical form Tarana. The composition is indeed a scintillating dance number in the format as it employs varied rhythmic patterns of Sollus which are usually embedded with the name of the composition such as Diri diri tillānā and so on. The Tillana comprises three sections - the first is a long drawn out passage of Sollukattu followed by three lines of Sāhitya which once again carry the narrative forward. The Tillānā then concludes with a short cadence of rhythmic mnemonics.

|| Tillana ||

Sahitya :- Sadaya hoyi murari he tu avadhāri

Atamtari tujavinā sangahari ||

Ticē mahāśina kona vari

Please listen to me, Oh! Murari and tell me who else can alleviate the extreme grief of the nayika except you. Hence, Hari! be compassionate towards her and assuage her afflictions.

(11) Abhinava Pada :-

The structure of this composition is analogous to the abhinayapada, the item preceding tillana. The composition starts with Pallavi, Anupallavi followed by three caranas.

Abhinaya Pada

Pallavi:- Baya kanca ha svabhava |  
ugaca nathavari rusave ||

Anupallavi:-Faraca karita hi priti |  
manita asane sthriyani ati pritine ||

Carana(1):- Nāyakāsa sahaje kaduna nenatepane adhika  
une bolane ha na ho avaguna ||

(2):- Tiyevari tu yadunatha | karita hotāsi  
adhika mamata | Teha bolata kāya-gadalē ki avacita ||

(3):- Atā ghari ruji kāntā | Far pave(viraha) avastha |  
Daya karavi Tijavari atā | Sarabhendra stuta ||

Pallavi:-

It is the stock habit of women to often resent and get annoyed with their spouses.

Carana(1):-

If a wife is bestowed with immense love by her husband, then she takes it for granted that her husband is in her sole possession. But the husband though aware of it, pretends to be ignorant of all this and if the wife comes to know of his pretensions, then out of impatience caused due to extreme love, may speak ill of her husband. But this cannot be understood as a bad quality.

Carana(2):-

Oh! Yadunatha, you showered enormous affection on her alas, what has happened to You, all of a sudden, did she utter anything wrong.

Carana(3):-

The Nayika is lamenting in her house, her condition is extremely pitiable and she is longing to meet You, Hence Oh! Lord worshipped by Sarabhendra show mercy and join her soon.

(12) Jakkini:-

This is a very ancient dance form which figured in the middle of the dance dramas. We find the mention of this dance form in the works of King Vijayaraghava Nayaka, who was himself a celebrated composer of many such desi dance forms. His court dancer 'Mūrti' is said to have gained extraordinary proficiency in this particular dance number. There are scholars who maintain two versions regarding the derivation of the term 'Jakkini'.

"According to Dr. V. Rāghavan<sup>(1)</sup>, the 'Jakkini Daruvu' a Natya Dhruva has derived its name by the performers who are known as 'Jakkulu'\*(Jakkuluvāru). But another scholar Sri Y. Satyanarāyaṇa Rao<sup>(2)</sup> opines that "since Jakkulu being wandering tribal folk", could not have performed, these darus which are classical in nature. He further states **that** "Jakkini is a distorted form of yakshini in Sanskrit and that Jakkini perform dances with Mṛdaṅgams hanging on their waists and the daruvus

(1) Cf.Y. Satyanarāyaṇa Rao - Svarapallavi - "Jakkini Daruvulu" - The Journal of The Music Academy, Madras - Vol.XXXVI - P. 109.

(2) Ibid

• We also find the reference to the term 'Jakkula' in the 14-15th century work, Kṛidābhīrāmam.

composed for this type of dance are called Jakkini Daruvus". The savant further opines that "the term might have also been derived from the instrument Jakki or light drum used for ritual music". Regardless of these varied versions, Jakkini as a dance composition had been quite popular right from the Nayak upto the Maratha period.

King Sāhaji was a reputed author of Jakkinidaru prabandha comprising **five darus** set to different ragas. The composition structure of a JakkinT daru in the format of Nirupana is a combination of Sollukattu, Sahitya and Svaras. This composition, starts with a brief passage of Sollukattu continued by a line of Svara and two verses of Sahitya. This is ensued by 4 lines of Solfa passages. In the first passage svara and sollus are interspersed which incorporate certain euphonical wordings such as Yellām, Yallilām lāle etc. The Sahitya of the Jakkini daruvus may centre round themes which are devotional or otherwise is based on the story content of the Nirupana.

### **Jakkini**

Sāhitya:- Anēkanāyikā māji | Tilatula Far rāji ||  
ka as'a kopa aji | dharila ka krsnāci j

Amongst your many nāyikās, my friend is the most beloved to You, Oh!Krsna but why is this anger towards her to day?

### (13) Gita:-

Generally 'Gita' as a composition in the present day does not belong to the realm of dance musical form, but has a significant place in the field of art music. Gītas are known as one of the preliminary lessons or exercises taught to the beginners of art music as it creates vivid understanding of the raga structure and also helps in providing thorough

exercise to the vocal chords. Several such Gitas called 'Pillari gitas' were composed by Sangita **pitāmaha** Sri Purandaradasa, for the benefit of practitioners of the art. But texts like **Saṅgīta** muktavali of **Devanācārya**<sup>(1)</sup> and Sangita **Darpana** of **Dāmōdarā**<sup>(2)</sup> mention **Gīta** prabandha and **Gīta** respectively as definite items of dance. These genres have been incorporated in the sequential order of dance numbers stated by them. Perhaps due to this reason, **Serfoji-II** also might have included the composition 'Gita' as an item of dance in the Nirupanas.

The composition Gita of **Nirūpana** format has svara and Sahitya interwoven and interestingly the interspersed syllables such as 'Sa- ng - u', etc., which when combined together form the libretto of the composition.

### **Gīta**

Mi sangu kounasa Hari  
 nahe ki he dusari  
 Japakhi maji sakhi **tuṭā** beda |  
 Tuja Sangatine te **pōuramanāśī**  
 Thaukoni **jhāli** prouḍa catura riari |  
 aikaja.

To whom shall I tell this, Oh! Hari that one is not like the other. My friend has become mad and is craving for your company, now go and understand her. Your indifference is because of the insane company with which you are associating, but in your company, the **nāyikā** will give up her childishness and become matured and a clever lady. Please listen to me (Oh! Lord **Kṛṣṇa**)

(1) **N Venkataramanan** - Ed., Saṅgīta muktāvali of Devanācārya; T.M.S.M.Library - P12 - Verses 27-28'

(2) **K Vāsudēva Sāstry** - Ed., - Saṅgīta Darpana of Catura Dāmōdara - T.M.S.Series No.34.. P.217 Verses 201-203



(14) Prabandha:-

It is another form, similar to the preceding number Gita. It has both svara and Sahitya passages interwoven along with brief line of Sollus interspersed in between svara passages. Like in Gita, here also we find the presence of the scattered syllables and their extensions which, when combined together become the words of the Sahitya connoting the meaning of the lyric. In some of the Nirupanas for example 'Saripataca dāva Kalpita Katha'- Nirupana, Serfoji has deleted the prabandha composition.

Visaravile Hari tatice aptaloka

Sakala hi tijala | Deva adhika adara jane vada.

In your love she has forgotten her near and dear and so Oh! Hari now give her happiness and loving care.

(15) Triputa:-

This belongs to the prabandha type of composition and has all the three angas namely svara, s'ollu and s'ahitya incorporated in it. The term triputa means "having three putas or parts". The three aspects svara, s'ollu and Sahitya are enfolded together like the putas or petals of flower, which mean, the exposition of the three elements would be as beautiful as the blossoming of a flower. A notable feature of this composition is that all the three **angas** are combined or assembled arbitrarily so much so that they are not separately distinguishable. But surprisingly in this Nirupana, we do not find the Sahitya incorporated in the Triputa and the composition comprises only svara and sollu lines intermingled with each other.

(16) Sloka varna:-

**Sloka varnas** may mean verses set to definite ragas and intended to be

sung in those Rāgas<sup>(1)</sup>. Many such sloka varnas in Lalitapancama raga have been quoted as Lakṣya pieces by King Tulaja-I in Raga chapter of his work “Saṅgita Sārāmṛta”. According to (temple) Agama sāstras there is a tradition of reciting śloka or verses in praise of gods called churnikas before offering puspanjali to the deities.<sup>(2)</sup> Churnika is also referred to as a literary form sung in Devagandhari rāga, in loose rhythm which figures in operas.<sup>(3)</sup> Such a Chūṇikā is also found in Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam an opera composed by Saint musician Sri Tyagaraja. Yet, this composition belongs to the field of applied music, wherein the words are important and music is applied or used for the purpose of singing the Sahitya. Such songs are portrayed only through abhinaya (devoid of Nr̥tta) as they pertain to the Anibaddha type where the music of the composition is not conditioned and bound by any specific time measure, tala and is not characterised by the presence of svara passages.

But, Serfoji-II on the contrary has introduced in his sloka varnas, svara passage along with Sāhitya, both of which are in conformity with a definite tala (miśra cāpu) and raga. As Sahitya is akin to slokas or verses with rhetorical embellishment and more of a descriptive nature as in the case of varna, hence the name sloka varna might have been given to this composition. Sloka varna facilitates in the delineation of theme in reaching the final stages of the narrative (story).

This composition commences with four lines of Sahitya and culminates in to two line svara passage. The verses in the Sahitya have the rhetorical embellishment 'antya prasa'.

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- (1) S. Subramanya Sāstri - Ed.. - Saṅgita Sārāmṛta of King Tulaja-I - published by The Music Academy, Madras - 1942 - P.53
  - (2) Dr.Natarāja Rāmākṛṣṇa - 'Dakṣiṇāṭya Nāṭyakalā Caritra' Vishalandra Publishing House. - Hyderabad - 1987 - P.120.
  - (3) P.Sambamoorthy - 'A Dictionary of South Indian Music and Musicians', The Indian Music Publishing House - Madras - 1952 - Vol.-I - P.92.

### Sloka Varna

Sāhitya :- Veniphani karuniya apulyā karane |  
ta raksilē Hari tilā bahu ādarānē |  
dhikkaruni tija atā jari tākīśī re |  
dukkhāśī yaci visare magate kaśī re ||

Oh! Hari, it was you who combed and plaited the hair of the Nayika with your hands and even protected her with utmost care but now, you have abandoned and deserted her. How can she forget such an acute grief?

(17) Kautta:-

This penultimate item in the format of Nirūpaṇa is referred to as Kautta. According to Bharatārṇava of Nandikesvara, a Kouta or Koutuka is defined as composition in particular tālas formed of instrumental sounds intermixed with words in praise of a deity and the three letters Ka-u -ta represent the goddesses Sarasvati - Mahalaksmi and Parvati respectively.<sup>(1)</sup> This item is to be performed after a 'Ridi' or a composition in instrumental music syllables, following the Nandi in Ada tāla.<sup>(2)</sup> As per the temple ritualistic music and dance, Kavuttuvam is an item performed to the accompaniment of various musical instruments. Sollus and that the Sahitya intended for the propitiation and glorification of the presiding deity of the temple is only to be recited and should not be musically rendered. Interestingly, the Kautta of Nirupana, starts with a passage of Sollus intermixed with Sāhitya that is to be sung followed by a brief section of Jati. The Sahitya of Kautta brings the story or the narrative of the Nirupana to an end. Kautta's Hindustani dance counter part known as Kavitha is an item comprising verses intermixed

(1) K. Vāsudēva Śāstri - Ed., 'Bharatārṇava of Nandikēśvara' - P.496 - Verses 11-14

(2) Ibid - P.493.

with **bhols** set in the **tala** patterns which are to be rhythmically recited and the meaning of it expressed through abhinaya.

### **Kautta**

Sahitya:- Vinavite mi Karyugajoduni Vanduni  
Tujala nija sukhadeuni tijala  
Sarabhendra stuta murali **lōlā** ||

Oh! Murali **lōlā**, the one worshipped by Sarabhendra with both the hands folded and with sheer humility, I,(sakhi) pray to you to bestow my friend, your beloved with real happiness.

Serfoji strikes a philosophical note in the phrase Nijasukha or real happiness signifying the lofty ideal and essence of madhura bhakti - **Jivātma** (Nayika) yearning to unite with **Paramātma** (Nayaka).

(18) Mangale:-

It has been a customary practice for any programme of music and dance to commence and end with a benedictory song and the one that figures towards the end of the performance is referred to as **Maṅgalam** or an auspicious and a propitious finale which is called as Mangaje in Marathi. This song is only musically rendered unaccompanied by dance and is intended to seek the divine grace and requesting the almighty to pardon any lacuna inadvertently committed by the artists during the course of the performance. Resembling 'Jaya **Jaya**' in its structure. Mangale, the concluding item in the format of **Nirūpaṇa**, has all the three regular sections - Pallavi, Anupallavi and a Carana.

### **Maṅgaḷe**

Pallavi:- Mangale **Laksmi Nāyakāśi** |  
**Maṅgaḷe** Tuja Madhavasi ||

Anupallavi:- AṅgaJācyā janakāśi

Sagara sukha Sayanāśi subha mangale ||

Carana:- Divya Pakṣīndrayānāśi

Daitya brnda dala nāśi |

Gavyadaci baksakāśi |

/ \_\_\_\_\_

Bhavya Sarabhendra pāliśi mangale ||

Pallavi:- Maṅgale to Laksmi Nayaka

Maṅgale to Madhava

Anupallavi:- **Mangale** to the father of cupid, one who  
reclines in the milky ocean.

Carana:- **Maṅgale** to the divine bird Garuda

**Maṅgale** to the destroyer of the congeries of demons

**Mangale** to the one who is fond of milk and butter

**Maṅgale** to the protector of the humble Sarabhendra

Thus the royal composer has painted, vividly on the canvas of Nirupana, the different shades of the Nayika in Vipralambha Sṛṅgāra. Rasaprakaraṇam a work on the theory of aesthetics compiled by Muwallur Sabhapattayya identifies five different sources of Vipralambha Sṛṅgāra such as Ayoga (separation), Viraha (abandonment), Mana (indignation), Pravasa (dwelling abroad), and Sṛpa (curse).

Among these, the first two causative factors have been clearly elucidated by Serfoji-II through the actions of the Nayika such as -

- (1) Cinta or anxiety to fulfill the desire of uniting with the lover shown by Nayika's actions through sighing and restlessness on hearing the footsteps of the pass'ers-by and with the movement of blade of grass.
- (2) Sankalpa or yearning for the beloved, shown by recollecting happy reminiscences of the past and being engrossed in the thoughts and unaware of her surroundings.

- (3) Kriyadvesa or spurning of things such as beautiful flowers and cool moonlight giving scorching effect etc., thinking only of the beloved and enshrining him in her heart.
- (4) Tapa or tormenting situation, shown by restlessness and having no curative efficacy even after the application of Sandal paste on the body.
- (5) Lajjatyaga:-dispensing the dignity by being unmindful of people's remarks (Krsna vayasana)
- (6) **Unmāda** - maddening actions by being unaware of her actions such as beholding anything that is black in colour (black cobra) as her beloved Lord Krsna.

All these states of love have been very aptly projected by means of fine illustrations in the Nirūpaṇa which are only axiomatic in proving the scholar king's proper moorings in the theory of aesthetics.

The Format of Sadir - Bharatanatya systematised and standardised by the Tanjore Quartette -

Unlike the format of Nirupana, adhering to the Ekartha type or single theme narrated by one or more danseuse with the help of 18 different thematically interlinking items set to Eka raga and tāla, the Tanjore Quartette on the otherhand have focused on the format based on Prthagartha type adopting different themes to be portrayed by a single danseuse (Ekaharya Lāsyaṅga) by means of varied dance numbers composed to variegated ragas and tālas. In the context of single theme or more, both Raja Serfoji-II and the Tanjore Quartette have carefully followed the Natya Sastra which describes in detail the characteristics and application of the Lasya dance. According to it, the Lasya, which is so called because of its **shining(Lasana)**, is to be performed by one person and its subject matter also should be suitable and the theme may

have one or many topics.<sup>(1)</sup> Nāṭya Śāstra mentions 12 types of Lāsyāṅgas<sup>(2)</sup> In addition to the Nāṭya Sastra, a study of many ancient treatises, throws much light on the sequential order of items that was followed during their respective periods. The Nṛtya adhyaya of 'Sangita Ratnakaram' of Nīśaṅka Sārṅgadeva, (13th century) gives 10 such Deśī Lāsyāṅgas,<sup>(3)</sup> some of which involve the rhythmic movements of different parts (major and minor limbs) of the body in dance.

The 10 Lasyas are as follows:-

- 1) Cālī      2) Calivada      3) Ladhi      4) Suka      5) Uroṅgaṇa
- 6) Dhasaka      7) Aṅgaḥāra      8) Oyaraka      9) Vihasi      10) Mana

Sangita Mukṛavali, a 15th century work on dance, authored by Devanacarya (Devendra), a court poet of Proudhā Devaraya of Vijayanagar (16th century A.D.) gives a series of items, which adhere more closely to the sequence of a solo recital of a female dancer.

The items<sup>(4)</sup> are :-

- 1) Puṣpāñjali
- 2) Mukha Cālī
- 3) Suddha-yati Nṛtta
- 4) Rāgaṅga-yati Nṛtta
- 5) Sabda Nṛtta
- 6) Rupa-Nṛtta (i.e., dance and abhinaya of song compositions or Rūpakas)
- 7) Dhvada
- 8) Sabdacālī
- 9) Sūda Sabda;
- 10) Sūdagīta

Various Gita prabandhas, dances to compositions more definitely local - Cindu, Daru, Dhrupad etc.

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- (1) A Board of Scholars - Translation into English - The Nāṭya Śāstra of Bharatamuni - P.442; Verses 426-435
  - (2) Ibid PP.443-445; Verses 436-479.
  - (3) R. Rangarāmanuja Ayyangar - 'Saṅgīta Ratnākaram' of Nīśaṅka - Sārṅgadeva - A study; Wilo Publishing House; Bombay - 1978; PP.364-365
  - (4) Cf. Dr. V. Raghavan - 'Bharatanāṭya'; The Journal of the Music Academy, Madras. Vol. XLV.P.245

Likewise 'Saṅgita Darpaṇam' another treatise on music and dance written around 16th century by Catura Dāmōḍara Pandita, mentions in the beginning of its Dance Chapter-Nrtyadhyaya the following sequence of items<sup>(1)</sup>:-

- |                         |                 |                   |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1) Mukha cālī           | 2) Yati nr̥tta  | 3) Sabdacālī      |
| 4) Uḍupa                | 5) Dhruva       | 6) Suda Sabda     |
| 7) Kvāda                | 8) Gita Nr̥tyam | 9) Cindu Nr̥tyam  |
| 10)Deśī Kattari Nr̥ttam | 11) Vaipota     | 12) Śabda Nr̥ttam |
| 13)Kalpanr̥ttam         |                 |                   |

The work further mentions certain desi dance forms such as Jakkani dhroupadam, peṇani and gondali nr̥tyam.

In olden days, the preliminary propitiatory composition of Sadir dance before the dancer's entrance to the stage started with Melaprapti or the Orchestral co-ordination of various musical instruments, beginning with playing on the mrdangam followed by several other instruments (VSdyabr̥nda). This was followed by nattuvanar keeping the time measure by wielding the cymbals and reciting the Sollukattus. Inbetween the melaprapti, Tōḍayamaṅgalam an invocatory song was sung with an avowed purpose to seek the blessings of the almighty for the successful completion of the performance. This initial music was set to prescribed raga and tāla.

But in present day Bharata Nāṭyam recitals, all these preliminary proceedings have been modified and reduced to the minimum on account of the frenetic activity which is also due to paucity of time. The performance commences with an invocatory song called Ganēśa stuti, invoking the blessings of Lord Ganes'a, followed by nattuvanār's recitation of short sollukattu. It is after the completion of

(1) K. Vāṇḍēva Śāstri - Ed - Saṅgita Darpaṇa of Catura Dāmōḍara - T.M.S.Series No.34: 1952- P. 183 - Verses-1-7



these brief preliminaries that the dancer enters the stage to perform the first dance number of the Bharatanatyam format called Alarippu. Since Bharatanatyam basically evolved as an art practised within the sacred precincts of the temple, there is a practice in the present day recitals to include Puṣpāñjali and Kavuttuvam before starting with the Alarippu with a view to reviving these old ritualistic dances. We find the reference of Puṣpāñjali as the preliminary item in the sequential order of dance numbers mentioned by Devendra in his treatise 'Sangitamuktavali', likewise 'Bharatārṇava' of Nandikesvara also mentions Puṣpāñjali or preliminary offering of flowers, as an item to be performed at the beginning of Sapta Lāsya<sup>(1)</sup>, in order to yield beneficial results. The work further illustrates the two modes of performing the puspanjali dance, the one being Daivika (celestial) and the other known as Mānusa(Human)<sup>(2)</sup>. As the names suggest the Daivika mode is to be adopted by celestials and Mānusa mode by **human** beings, but the celestials are privileged to use either mode unlike the human beings. In the Daivika mode, first puspanjali **is** to be performed by the dancer, who shall propitiate the gods first, except when the dance is performed in the presence of the Trinity, their consorts, Maha Ganapati, Skanda and the seven **mothers**<sup>(3)</sup>. This is followed by dances prescribed in the original texts, and in the case of Manusa mode, 'mukhacāli' is to be followed after Puspanjali. In this mode puspanjali is always offered to the divine couple, Lord Siva and Parvati first and then begins the seven dances called Sapta Lāsya. The work prescribes the rules regarding the worship of the presiding deities of the eight quarters - Asta Dikpalas. Further the kinds of flowers

(1) K Vāsudeva Siisri - **Editor** - "Bharatārṇava" of Nandikesvara T.M.S Series No. 74; Chapter- XV - P.457; verses889-898

(2) **Ibid**- P.458, verses889-898

(3) **Ibid** - PP.461-462; Verses-898-910

to be used and also the mode of offering them to different deities have also been clearly elucidated in the work. Hence, **Puṣpāñjali** became an indispensable part of the temple ritual which was performed to seek the blessings of the Gods and Goddesses in order to ward off obstacles and to bring good fortune and prosperity to the governing forces- the Kings as well as the people and the members of **Vādyabṛṇḍa** and above all for the success in the art taught by the Natyacarya or the dance teacher. Owing to its auspicious significance, this item also figured as part of the Nandi in **Pūrvaraṅga** rituals of dance and dance dramas. In the literature of Nayak period also we find the reference to the Puspanjali dance. King Raghunatha in his work Valmiki Caritra, describing the dance of **Rambhā**, the celestial nymph, mentions **Puṣpāñjali** as the opening dance number.

In the catalogue of the Sanskrit manuscripts of Thanjavur Sarasvati Mahal Library, one such manuscript contains 'Lasya Puṣpāñjali'<sup>(1)</sup> written by an unknown author. The term lasya seems to be an emphasis on the delicate and graceful presentation of the **Puṣpāñjali**.

According to **Natyasastra**, Lasya was first inaugurated by Goddess **Pārvati** which was the delicate, graceful and gestureless dance<sup>(2)</sup> that formed part of the preliminaries<sup>(3)</sup> of a drama. Like **Puṣpāñjali**, the main objective of this dance according to **Abhinava gupta**, the commentator of **Nāṭyaśāstra** was for "adrstaphala i.e., for pleasing gods and avoiding obstacles"\*<sup>(4)</sup>.

(1) **Sanskrit** manuscript No.-D. 10714. \*the text of this Lāsyapūspāñjali is given in the Appendix.

(2) **Nāṭyaśāstra** - Chapter.IV (249-50)

(3) Ibid - Chapter XXXI-333

(4) **Abhinavagupta's commentary** on **Natyasastra** Chapter XXI-354 Cf.Dr. Kanak- Kela - Ed., Hand Book of 'Indian Classical Dance Terminology' - Published by Nalanda Dance Research Centre, Bombay - 1992 - P.18.

Owing to the similarity in the purpose of both lasya and puspanjali, the term lasya might have been prefixed to the **Puṣpāñjali** and in all probability **Puṣpāñjali** according to Tanjore style seems to have been referred to as 'Lasya Puṣpāñjali'.

Likewise **Kavuttuvams**, being ritualistic dance forms were performed especially during temple festival (Brahmotsva) celebration. According to Pancamarabu of Arivanar the sound produced by the verbal utterances of **śollu** synchronising with the rhythmic sounding of syllables such as **Tōm Tōm Kirakita** etc. played on **Mṛdaṅgam - tāla vadya** is called **Kavuttuvam**. It is also known as **ottu Kavuttuvam** or **Vayimozhi Kavufuvam** i.e. the verbal recitation of **sollu(oral drumming)**<sup>(1)</sup>.

In ancient Tamil music, the **Kavuttavams** incorporated **śollus** which when combined with other syllables lent meaning to the lyrical portion. For example - the phrase '**Tam Tam endru Tammayē nennai tarn**' in Tamil means 'thinking about ones own welfare, one thinks of oneself. In this the **sollu 'Tam tarn'** which means, myself also serves as **sollu aksaras** conveying meaning to the **Sahitya**. Special **Kavuttuvams** known as **Pancamurti** and **Navasandhi Kavuttuvams** were composed by **Gangaimuttu annavi**, the grand father of Tanjore Quartette.

#### (1) Alarippu:-

The term **Alarinpu** is a verbal noun form derived from the Telugu word '**Alarincu**' which means to please or gratify<sup>(2)</sup>. The dance number is performed to the **pātākṣarās** or rhythmic syllables **Tā thai thaiyyum.....** recited by the **nattuvanar** unaccompanied by raga. But there is a practice

(1) **V.P.K.Sundaram** - Ed., **Pāṇcamarabu of Arivanar**, published by The South India Saiva Siddhanta works Publishing Society - Tirunelveli. 1991 - P.347

(2) **Vide** - **lecture** delivered by Dr. **Aruna** on **The format of Bharatanatvam**, at **S.N.School**, University of Hyderabad. 1992.

in some schools to sing Tiruppugazh as an accompaniment to the **sollukattu** recited by the nattuvanar. However this item seems to be the replica of the Suddhayati Nr̥tta mentioned in the treatises as it is performed purely to the rhythmic mnemonic utterances, devoid of **raga** and **Sahitya**. The choreographic pattern of the dance is highly suggestive of its name - the blossoming of dance, as the dancer gradually opens up the major and minor limbs of the body to perform varied movements that are pleasing and beautiful to look at. The Alarippu begins with the dancer standing in the **samapāda** stance in perfect repose with her hands outstretched horizontally sideways at the shoulder level holding **patakahasta** (**Nāṭyārambham** position). She then lifts the hands symmetrically on the head holding **Afijalihasta**,\* which are gradually brought down near the face and then near the chest level. All the three positions represent the reverence offered to Gods (on the head) to the Guru (near the face) and to the assembly of spectators (at the chest level) respectively, thus fulfilling the concept of **Sabhavandanam** and at the same time invoking the grace of the almighty and offering obeisance to the dance teacher. In this direction **Alarippu** seems to be a closer variant of **Puṣpāñjali**. The dancer first employs the **upangas** - the beautiful eye glances (**Dr̥stibhedas**), along with the subtle, lateral movements of the neck (**Sundarigrivā** or otherwise known as **Attami** in dance parlance) and to the **s'ollus** vocalised in the **vilamba kāla** or slow speed, the dancer gradually using the other parts of the body executes symmetrically, the different fascinating geometrical **adavu** patterns, in its simplest form. These movements, initially performed in the standing and **Ardhamandali** postures are once again duplicated in the **Muzhumandi**, balancing the weight of the body on the heels. In no other item in the format one

• **Anjalihasta** - when the palms of both the **paṭāka hastas** are clasped together. (the hasta is known as **Anjalihasta**).

can see such a long durated muzhumandi position as in the case of this particular number. The dancer further weaves beautiful adavu patterns to the recitation of pātākṣaras in madhya and drutakala (medium and quadruple speeds). In the drutakala the choreography employs swift display of Tat tai taha adavu which culminates into a short tirmanam (using the ṣollu Tadhiginatom of Tirmāna adavu) which gives a crowning effect to the entire dance number and due to this reason, the tirmanam of Alarippu is also called as makutam.

Alarippu is set to ekatala, but performed to either of the five jatis or units consisting rhythmic beats of 3-TisVam, 4-Caturaśram, 5-Khandam, 7-Misram and 9-Saṅkirnam, and hence are identified by the jati to which it is performed. Alarippu being introductory item serves the dual purposes of sabhavandanam on one hand and as prefatory and warming up number for the dancer as it involves the unfolding of the major and minor limbs of the body in periodicity and preparing the dancer not only physically but with a psychological makeup to become alert in successfully executing the more complicated aspects of the abstract dance that are to follow in the different genres in the format. It is not only a warming up dance number for the dancer alone but also for musicians in preparing themselves for greater demands called for in the ensuing numbers. Though a short number, introducing the rudimentary elements of Nr̥tta. Alarippu is indicative of the manifold aspects of the art and also the structural complexities present in the succeeding items in the format.

## (2) Jatisvaram:-

After acquainting the dance performed purely to the accompaniment of Sollukattus in the preliminary item, the element of raga or melody is introduced in the second item called Jatisvaram where the rhythmic

sequences - Jatis set to a rhythmic time measure are well matched to the musical setting or the groupings of the solfa notes - svaras of that respective raga in which the composition is composed. The Rāgāṅga yati nr̥tta mentioned in the treatise Saṅgita Muktavali seems to be the ancient counter part of the present day Jatisvaram. Unlike the Sollu of Nirupana format, where Sollukattus are recited on the pattern of the musical setting of the svara like svara sollu, Jatis or rhythmic sequences in Jatisvaram are not performed to the sollus vocalised but are executed to musical rendition of the svaras by the singer i.e. different korvais are matched to the musical settings of the svaras that are rendered. Initially before the period of Tanjore Quartette, 'Jatisvaram used to be literally Jatis set to a melodic format and it was only later that svara passages were grafted to them(Jatis) and this was done by Tanjore Quartette to enhance the beauty of this number and since then the dance has remained Jati based'<sup>(1)</sup>. In this direction it is worthy to note that the dance musical form svarapallavi perhaps an older form of present Jatisvaram is also a composition devoid of Sahitya and intended to be presented as pure dance number to the rendition of svara phrases and recitation of sollus set to a specific time measure. The structure of svarapallavi has three component parts Pallavi. Anupallavi and Carana. Pallavi is generally presented in madhyamakāla unlike the carana in drutakala and few svarapallavis also have Sahitya for its pallavi section. As Alārīppu is known by the Jati to which it is performed so is the case with Jatisvarams, where it is identified by the raga to which it is composed. Apart from the employment of single raga to the Jatisvaram, a string of ragas are also used in the last svara passage of Anupallavi section. Such Jatisvarams

(1) Sri T.K. Mahalingam Pillai s (the dance gum and Director of in Rājardjesvari Nāṭyakalā Mandir of Bombay) lecture at the Third Nāṭyakalā conference at Madras. 1983. Cf. Sruti South Indian music and dance magazine; April-May, 1985 - P.32.

are referred to as **rāgamālika Jatisvarams**. The dancer begins the Jatisvaram with beautiful eye glances and simultaneously employs rhythmic stamping of the feet which cue the commencement of the brisk **tirmānam**, which not only imparts rhythmic brilliance but apparently establishes the tempo and pace of this item. This is followed by Pallavi and Anupallavi sections. The Pallavi section consists of a svara passage which is repeated 3-4 times and is well matched by the dancer weaving four different rhythmic dance patterns.

In contrast to pallavi section, the anupallavi comprises of 2-3 svara passages which are rendered only once.

The korvais in the pallavi section are usually performed in the slow and medium tempo and for each of the pallavi refrain, the dancer executes dance sequences that incorporate, the best permutations and combinations of adavus culled from simpler to the complex group of adavus. Generally in the last Pallavi refrain the korvai employs the internal subdivisions of the beats within the **tāla** known as nadai which enhances rhythmic vitality and dynamism of pure dance. These korvais are performed in juxta-position to the right and left in the symmetrical fashion. The beauty of these korvais bespeaks of the choreographers competency in exploring and improvising within the range of pure dance of **Bhratanatyam** to bring about artistically conceived dance sequences that are aesthetic and arresting in nature. A noteworthy feature in the Jatisvarams is that every **solfa** passage is punctuated towards its end with rhythmic finale which covers the space geometrically through linear and diagonal movements. After several encores of the pallavi, follows the svarapassages of Anupallavi section which introduce the nuances of the raga of the composition along with equally bewitching variegated dance sequences that are mostly performed in drutakala.

In addition to the elements of jati and raga, the 3rd genre in the format acquaints with the lyrical aspect or Sahitya which is interpreted through abhinaya. Sabdams have a simple musical setting and since it introduces the poetic text for the first time in the format, the interpretation of Sahitya by means of abhinaya is not amplified upon. Since the theme of the Sabdams are centered round the glorification of the deeds of the Gods, Kings or venerable persons, they are also termed in Sanskrit as YasogTis.

The composition consists of four Sahitya passages each of which is set to different raga but one single tala usually being misra capu. Previously Sabdams were not set to ragamālika but were sung in one raga, usually Kambhoji and Misracapu tala. Interestingly even the Sabdams set to ragamālika, begin with the Kambhoji raga. The Sabdam commences with cueing syllables 'tat taiya tai datta tarn' followed by short passage of sollukattu (tadana tandana) that are to be sung, like the 'sollu' of Nirupana. In between the Sahitya passages are couched brief jati sequences which are also musically recited. The item gets winded up **with** slightly elaborate passage of sung 'sollukattu' compared to its previous ones. The sabdams were performed both in the court\* as well as in the temple and the last lyrical line in the Sabdam invariably ends with the salutary verse "Sallāmure"(which means Salute unto thee). But in the sabdams performed in the present day Bharatanatyam we find the word 'Sallamure' being replaced by 'Namostute'.

**The term 'Sallāmu'**, though crept into the Telugu language, was a derivative of the urdu word **Sallam**, which means to 'Salute' or greet. perhaps on account of the influence of muslim rule over Andhra around

\* **Sabdams in praise of Raja Serfoji-II have been listed in the Appendix.**



late 17th century A.D. Darus incorporating the term 'Sallamu' called Sallamdarus became popular dance musical forms in Tanjore.

From the literature of the Nayak period, it is inferred that sabdas constituted an important dance number in the format of dance as Champakavalli and Chandrarekha, the court dancers of Vijayaraghava Nayaka were the celebrated exponents of 'śabda' Who were conferred the titles 'śabda' cudamani' and 'sabda cintāmani' respectively.

(4) Varnam :-

This central piece in the format of Sadir is indeed the most important and comprehensive item known for its dexterity as well as its artistic value. This breath taking number is equally challenging for the musicians of the dance troupe and more so the dancer, as it testifies to her artistic potentialities and technical virtuosity. Each of the foregoing genres, has invariably introduced one single element of dance. The (1) Alarippu - Śuddha Nr̥tta (2) Jatisvaram - Nr̥tta and Raga or melody (3) Sabda - Nr̥tta - Raga and Abhinaya. In varnam, we find the mature and harmonious exemplary combination of all these three elements of dance activity, the pure dance, the interpretative dance and the expressive dance marking the judicious blend of the essentials of music and dance - Bhava. Raga and Tala. "The word 'varnam' is probably a shortened form of 'varnanam' meaning definitive description and the term also denotes letter or character of the syllable, colour, class etc."<sup>(1)</sup> In addition to this definition the melodic movement or ganakriya is also referred to as Varna<sup>(2)</sup>. From this it can be inferred that varna was more a musical form, delineating melodic structure of the raga and its elaborations. It is quite natural for

(1) P.Sankaranaravana - Telugu - English Dictionary, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi. 1986 - P.F.1067-1068.

(2) Dr. S. Seetha - Tanjore As a Seat of Music - University of Madras - P.310

most of the dance musical forms to have evolved from the realm of art music and **varna** seems no exception to this phenomenon as it might have been adapted as dance musical form by effecting slight modifications to suit the dance activity in general and in accentuating the rhythmic, poetic as well as the melodic aspects of the composition in particular.

**Varnam and its anatomical structure:-** The thematic content of the **varnam** is often pivoted round the **vipralamba Sṛṅgāra** (separation of lovers) which has also been the predominant type of **sṛṅgāra** and mainstay of the themes in most of the dance pieces. The hero or the Nayaka of varnams may be a deity, King or other chieftans and its initial section describes the glories and the qualities of the hero. Varnam being the complex item, has two parts or **aṅgas**. The former part is called the **pūrvāṅga** and the latter the **uttarāṅga**. The purvariga section consists of pallavi, anupallavi, muktayi or cittasvara and its corresponding Sahitya. The lyrical text of pallavi and anupallavi is sung in slow tempo compared to the **uttarāṅga** section. This facilitates the dancer to perform different sancari **bhāvas** relevant to the import of the poetic lines. For the first rendering of Pallavi line, the dancer standing in samapada stance, performs the subtle and graceful neck and eye movements and then stamping the ground with the feet, prepares herself for a breathtaking jati in three speeds known as Trikala jati. The phrasing of the jati is in the slow speed first, then the **sóllus** of the first speed are doubled in the second speed and quadrupled in the third speed. The tongue-twisting **tirmānam** reeled off by the **nattuvanar**, matched by an equally meticulous foot work and scintillating body movements of the dancer give an eye filling experience to the onlookers and hence is the most awaited **one in the varnams** as it invests with special charm to the entire composition.

The beauty ushered out by Trikala tirmanam depends on the artistic and intricate rhythmic variations of jati and its perfect execution by the dancer briskly without sacrificing the ariga śuddham or grace and precision of body movements at the expense of increasing speed. For each line of Pallavi and Anupallavi the dancer performs an elaborate jati which serves as connecting link between Sahitya passages. Every jati, including the Trikala jati ends with a brief rhythmic dance cadence called 'arudi' usually set to a single āvarta or one full time measure of a tāla. After the arudi to the trikala jati, the dancer moves to the centre of the stage to perform abhinaya for the s̄ahitya passages with the help of Āngika, Sattvikabhinaya and Sañcāris.\* The composer's signature is normally found in the anupallavi section. This is followed by a solfa passage and its corresponding s̄ahitya called cittasvara and cittasvara s̄ahitya respectively. The cittasvara is also referred to as muktayisvara, as the term muktāyi means finale or that which occurs towards the end. Thus after the concluding part of muktayisvara Sahitya, the first line of Pallavi is once again rendered which gives a finishing touch to the purvanga section.

Before the uttarāṅga section is taken up, a brisk jati is performed and then the uttarāṅga section commences with a line of Sahitya known as carana also termed as Ettugada pallavi. The term 'ettu' in Kannada means commencement and in Telugu refers to start or lift. Ettugada pallavi when correlated with the s̄ahitya of the pallavi and anupallavi sections completes the intrinsic meaning and highlights the import of the Sahitya of the varnam. This take-off portion is followed by 3-4 svara passages with its matching s̄ahitya termed as caranasvara or Ettugada svara-s̄ahitya. Every Sahitya passage in the uttarariga section is concluded with the employment of 'tattimettadavu', where one finds the dancer simulta-

- \* Sancari is an elaboration of the implied meaning of the lyrical lines with the help of relevant episodes to create minor emotions in order to further the development of the durable state or sthāyibhāva

neously gesticulating with hastas and mukhjabhinaya and through foot work(**Tattimettadavu**) establishes the rhythmic complexity of **nrtta** of **Bharatanatyam** by changing the nadai and concludes with diditai adavu or a variation of the adavu. In some **varnams**, the 'tattimettadavu' is uniformly employed for all the Sahitya passages of the composition. After the last caranasvara Sahitya, the carana is once again rendered which brings **varnam** to a close.

There are three types of varnams namely Tana varnam, Pada varnam and Ragamalika varnam.

#### I. Tana varnam:-

The term 'Tāna' refers to the exposition and elaboration of the raga rendered in **madhyamakāla** with pleasing combinations of the solfa syllables. Tanavarnam is a composition with minimal **sāhitya** that brings out the raga laksana, fineness and the panoramic potential of the **rāga** and are usually rendered in **madhyama** or druta **kāla**. The tana varnams are more suitable for the art music for the following reasons :-

1. The prefix 'Tāna' is suggestive of the delineation and exposition of the raga in an elaborate manner in a medium tempo. The aspect of tana rendering with the syllables **Tā** and Na is quite popular in the musical concerts which are predominantly employed due to its credibility in unraveling the possibilities in the varied and extensive treatment of the raga through svara sancaris or melodic structures.
2. **Tāna** varnams have minimal Sahitya passages comparatively to the size of its svara sections. Majority of the tana **varnams** are devoid of the corresponding Sahitya either to the muktayi svaras, carana svaras or both.

3. There is a customary practice of rendering Tana varnams in **madhyamakāla** or medium tempo or even at times in drutakala or faster tempo, which not only restricts the leisurely gesticulation through abhinaya, for a dancer but on the other hand provides ample scope for the musician to portray the melodic grace and the raga svarupa, which is the main spirit of the tana varnams.

## II. Pada varnam:-

Like the term 'tana', the prefix 'pada' is self explanatory as it suggests the presence of Sahitya or the poetic text. Unlike Tana varnam, majority of the pada **varnams** incorporate Sahitya for all its regular sections and are rendered (Pallavi and Anupallavi sections) in slow tempo - vilambita kala or **cauka** kala, placing the dancer in a more advantageous position, **enabling** her to prove her worth in the field of expressive dance.

Owing to its musical setting in slow tempo or cauka kala, the pada varnams are also known as cauka varnams. On a careful examination, we find that some of the important characteristic features of the padams are also showcased in the pada varnams. They are -

- (1) Having **Sāhitya** for all the sections a) Pallavi b) Anupallavi c) **Muktayi** svara and d)carana and e)carana svaras.
- (2) Rendition of the pada varnam (pallavi and anupallavi) in a rather slow tempo, provides ample scope for the distribution of words in the **lyric** which indeed facilitates leisurely interpretation of the poetic lines, thereby establishing the mood of the thematic content. Perhaps, it is for **these** above mentioned aspects that the composition varnam is rightly named as pada varnam.
- (3) Most of **the** pada varnas share **the** erotic themes native to padas.

### Significance of the pada varnam in the format of Sadir:-

Dance musical forms have been of receptive nature to take into its fold the best of the art musical pieces either in its entirety or by making suitable changes within its frame work and it seems that it is in the wake of this phenomenon that one can in all probability consider that pada varnam might have developed out of the TSna varnam.

A noteworthy feature of the pada varnam is that it encapsulates the important ingredients present in its preceding numbers as well as the genres that are to follow it. Hence, it is known as the complex as well as a composite item running for nearly an hour and has been privileged as the most important and eagerly awaited number in the Bharatanatyam recitals.

Darus as mentioned earlier formed the major part of the repertoire of the Nayak and the post Nāyak period until the second half of the 18th century. Such popular dance items were replaced by varnams which are more dexterous and elaborate in nature to the darus. Since varna is a long drawn-out item, there is abundant scope for the dancer to make patent the complexities and the manifold aspects inherent in the elements of dance such as Nrta, Nrtya and Abhinaya. Unlike the other items in the format, the Padavarnam incorporates the rhythmic, poetic as well as the melodic aspects in equal measure.

The Tanjore brothers with innovative bent of mind, gave a thrust to the varnams, with the sole aim of assigning the status to the composition in the recital based programme on par with the karnatic music katcheri paddhati.

Any thing new need not be catchy and captivating, but varnams, the innovation of the 18th century, became highly popular during the period and it was further embellished at the hands of many eminent Vaggeyakaras,

master musicians and dance masters like Tanjore Quartette. Among the royal composers Rāja Serfoji-II and Maharaja Svati Tirunāl have composed several pada varnams.

### III. Ragamalika Varnam:-

**Rāgamālīka** varnams also can be placed in the category of the pada varnams, except that some of the **rāgamālīka** varnams have different ragas, each for its Pallavi, Anupallavi, Cittasvara, Carana and the Caranasvaras. There are varnams in which only the last **carana** svara passage is set to ragamalika. Example:- The pada varnam “Sumasāyaka Vidura” set to Kapi raga and riipaka **tāla** in Sanskrit composed by Mahārāja Svati Tirunal, employs Kalyani, **Khamās**, Vasanta, Mōhanam, culminating with Kipi raga, for its last **caranasvara** portion.

**Svarajati**:- The structure and the thematic content of Svarajatis are akin to varnams except that the Cittasvara section of Svarajati has a line of Sollus interspersed with the svaras which are to be musically rendered on the lines of the svara passage.

Owing to its similarity with the varnams, svarajatis are often performed in place of the varnam. Several varnams and svarajatis composed by Tanjore Quartette have become popular numbers not only in the recitals of **Bharatanatyam** but also in other South Indian dance styles.

(5) **Pada** :- The term pada is generally used to connote a word or meaningful verse. Bharata in his **Nāṭyasāstra** refers to Pada as a 'Verbaltheme' in the context of defining the characteristics of the Gandharva **music**.<sup>(1)</sup> Poet Kālidāsa in his 'Mēghasandēśam' has stated that setting meaningful words (**sāhitya**) to music and writing meaningful

(1) Manomahan Ghosh - Translator - The Nāṭyasāstra of Bharatamuni the Asiatic Society, Calcutta. 1961 Vol.11. Chapter XXVIII; P.2, S.L.8-9.

Sahitya to the already set music as pada-" Viracita **padam** *gēyamudgātukāmā*".<sup>(1)</sup>

According to 'Prabandha Adhyaya' of Sangita **Ratnākaram**, a prabandha comprises six elements - Svara, Tala, Biruda, Pada, Tenaka and Pata. "The Sahitya that provided the **Mātu\*** was **Pada**"<sup>(2)</sup> But later on the entire composition inclusive of Dhatu and Matu came to be known as pada. With the passage of time, based on this concept, the compositions of **Purandaradāsa** and Annamacarya were given the general name 'Pada'. Irrespective of its connotation, pada as a dance musical composition is predominant in snigraha rasa or erotic sentiment which mirrors the delicate shades of Nayika - Nayaka bhavas in different situations.

Padas serve as illustrative examples to the theory of aesthetics with regard to the different classifications of the heroines and the heroes and not the least, the types of Dutis or messengers sent on a mission to convey the feelings evoked by love.

All such passionate expressions are only suggestive and are symbolically personified, as the yearning of the individual soul to get united with the supreme. Hence, the thematic content of most of the padas saturated with such sublime eroticism has truly elevated the dance number to the level of highest art of divine origin. Yet, it is not true to say that the entire stock of padas available, enshrine such lofty aspects as there are padas which portray carnal *srīṅāra* and are extremely sensuous and kindle baser instincts.

In addition to *srīṅāra*, there are padas dealing with the themes based

- The terms 'Matu & Dhatu' signify the Sahitya or libretto and the music of the composition respectively.

(1) Dr.V.Raghavan - **Nāṭyakalā** - **Kalaimagal** publications - 1974 - Madras - P.P70 - 71.

(2) **R.Rangaramānuja**Ayyangar - '**Saṅgēta Ratnākaram** - A study' - **Wilco** Publishing house. Bombay - 1978 - **Canto 4**- P. 153.



on bhakti, vairagya, **maṅgaḷa**, bhava and niti aspects. King **Sāhaji-II**'s padas referred to as Tyagesa padas are replete with such themes.

Nevertheless padas are unique for its' soulful music and its' deceptively slow tempo facilitate the distribution of the words in Sahitya, which hitherto caters to the leisurely depiction of interesting possibilities and varied ideas inherent and relevant to the theme. The **sāhitya** of the padas invariably dictates the undulation in musical motion and this **inturn** enhances the emotional appeal and lyrical beauty of the composition.

Like varnas, the descriptive nature of the libretto of the padas are equally demanding for the artists to prove their histrionic potentialities, the range of imaginative vision in exploring varied meaningful interpretations of the lyrical lines of the composition and importantly the ability to effectively portray the emotional state of the Nayika and Nayaka of the respective padas dealtwith.

The structure of this composition consists of pallavi, anupallavi followed by 2-3 **carana** sections. "The credit of pioneering the three section composition goes to the Tallapakam fraternity - **Annamācārya**, Cinnayya and **Perayya**"<sup>(1)</sup>.

In the padas whether Pallavi or Anupallavi, which ever is takenup first, the lyrical idea and motif is introduced and is further elaborated in the next ensuing section. In the carana sections, the resonant mood and sentiment encased in the Sahitya gets fully established. The credentials of **tāla** playing an undertone function and the absence of Svara and Sollu (rhythmic mnemonics) passages are highly useful in developing the theme and expounding the real import enshrined in it.

(1) **R.Raṅgarāmānuja Ayyaṅgār** - Sangita Ratnakaram - A Study - P.151.

Hence, padas create the visual pictures of the variegated emotions experienced by the human soul.

Javali :- Javalis are considered as the lighter Variants of a Pada. The thematic content of most of the Javalis deals with sr̥ṅgāra more of a sensuous nature as the Nayaka of these love lyrics, unlike padas, is very often a king or patron. Hence the concept of Madhura bhakti may not always find a place in Jāvalis. The term 'Javali', a derivative of Kannada word, is construed as a kind of lewd poetry. There is a general inference that the literary motif of most of the Javali compositions indulges in the Nayika making unsophisticated invitations to amorous deeds or that the different states of love are interpreted in an erotic manner often employing language that is more of colloquial nature. But such an explanation need not necessarily be true in its entirety. As there are padas which portray carnal sr̥ṅgāra so also we find Javalis which treat the theme of love in a dignified and respectable way (gaurava sr̥ṅgāra).

Javalis have good entertainment value and a definite appeal in the dance recitals as these mundane love lyrics are garbed in captivating rakti ragas and unlike padas are often rendered in medium or faster tempo, which gives a fillip to the recital after a long spun out pada. In corroboration of this, there is an observation regarding the origin of the term Javali, according to which the term “Jāva in Sanskrit means speed and that Javali will mean song born of with speed”<sup>01</sup>. But we also find few Javalis that are sung in cauka kāla. Hence, the derivation of the term seems to be of speculative nature that needs further probing.

As in the case of Padas, Jāvalis also have all the three regular sections Pallavi, Anupallavi and carana consisting of one or more Sahitya passages. But certain javali compositions are devoid of the Anupallavi

(1) **Sruti** - South Indian music and dance magazine, issue No.86,1991.

section. It is of the opinion that Javali as composition evolved during the 19th century. We find rich output of Javalis composed in several languages Viz., Telugu, Kannada, **Malayalam**, Tamil as well as in English.

**Tillana** :- After a protracted expressive dance numbers, Tillana gives further boost to the tempo of the dance.

Tillanas came to be composed during the 18th century and perhaps the earliest known composer of Tillana was **Melattūr** Virabhadrayya.

**Tillānās** became highly popular during the **Maratha** period and were said to have emerged from the Hindustani musical form called Tarana.

Since Tillana is a compositions made up of **patas** or rhythmic syllables, it gives sufficient room to the possibility of this genre to have evolved out of the pata or one of the six constituent **aṅgas** of a prabandha composition. The composition of a Tillana has three sections - Pallavi, Anupallavi and a carana. The pallavi and Anupallavi sections consist of Jatis which incorporate the name of the composition in the wordings viz., tillana dhitillana and so on. Compared to the Anupallavi, the Pallavi assumes greater significance as it is repeated several times to which the dancer performs the 'mey adavus' or the movements involving the skillfull employment of the angas (major limbs of the body) and **upaṅgas** (minor limbs of the face) in the initial sequence followed by the execution of beautiful korvais or nrta sequences evolved out of the combinations of various adavus which are performed with exacting geometric precision and deft foot work. The carana comprises, a brief passage of Sahitya which incorporates the signature of the composer. The Sahitya is usually eulogistic of either the deity, king or patron of art. The concluding section of the carana is once again a short jati which gives a crowing effect to the entire dance number. The Tillanas occasionally employ

svaras that are interwoven with the jatis. Owing to the presence of jati, svara and Sahitya in the libretto, some of the Tillanas are compared to the Jakkini darus which are presumed to be the precursors to the present Tillanas. Such a comparison does not seem to be totally appropriate since the svara passages of Jakkini darus are elaborate and unique unlike its insignificant place in the **Tillānās** which have svaras interspersed with jatis.

Tillanas set to captivating **ragas** are normally performed in the quick tempo. The beauty of Tillana is emanated from the manifold variations of different adavus, some of which are punctuated with sculptures que poses. But it should be remembered that ample use of such iconographic poses may on the contrary jeopardize the effectiveness of this scintillating number.

Indeed these lovely and lively items are known for its pleasing melody and rhythmic brilliance.

**Slokam** :- The format of **Sadir-Bharatanatyam** comes to an end with abhinaya performed to the slokas or verses that are usually rendered in ragamalika. Slokam belongs to the Anibaddha type and hence it is not conformed to any specific time measure.

Normally the prose passages culled out from puranic lore depicting various episodes glorifying the deeds of gods, form the text of the slokam. Episodes capable of evoking Nava rasas or nine sentiments are often attempted in which each of the rasas clothed in the verse is set to **an** appropriate raga that goes in tune with the rasa to be produced. Slokam in the present day recitals has become an optional item and mangalam is rendered to which the dancer offers her obeisance to the gods, **and** pays respects to the members of the orchestra and the audiences. With this propitious finale the recital comes to an end.

The following table gives a comparative study of the format of Nirupana and the format of Sadir systematised by the Tanjore Quartette.

<u>The Format of Nirupana</u>	The Format of Sadir ____
Followed the single theme (Ekartha) concept using single raga and tāla.	<u>Present day format of Bharatanatvam</u>
(1) Jaya Jaya	Adopted different themes or <b>Prthgārtha</b> type for the dance numbers set to varied ragas and tālas.
(2) Saranu	<b>Tōḍayamaṅgalam</b> or <b>Ganēśa Stuti</b> .
(3) <b>Alārū</b>	Stuti in praise of gods.
(4) <b>Sollu</b> Pure dance (Nṛtta) performed to the accompaniment of rhythmic syllables or Sollus that are recited musically.	Alarippu Jatisvaram Pure <b>dance</b> (Nṛtta) performed to the accompaniment of svara passages.
(5) Sabda The <b>Sāhitya</b> consists of 4 lines which is couched in between brief Sollu passages called Sabda. The lyrical lines do not end with the salutary verse 'Sallamure'.	Each of the four lines of the Sahitya is interspersed between short jati sequences and the last line of the Sahitya invariably ends with the salutary verse 'Sallamure' or 'Namostute'.
(6) Varnam The different arigas or sections are uniformly named as Sahitya and Svara respectively.	Varnam Akin to the structure of Varnam of Nirupana, but the <b>angas</b> are given definite names throughout the composition.
(7) Pada Presence of Svara passage in between Anupallavi and carana section.	Purely an abhinaya composition, devoid of svaras. Even the svarapadas donot incorporate the svara passage in its structure.

- (8) Svarajati  
Consists of five to six alternating  
svara and Sahitya passages.

- (9) Abhinaya pada

- (10)Tillānā

- (11)Abhinaya pada

- (12)Jakkini

- (13)Gita

- (14)Prabandha

- (15)Triputa

- (16)Sloka Varna  
consists of Sahitya followed  
by a Svara passage set to raga  
and tala.

- (17)Kautta

- (18) Mangale

The Svarajatis are akin to the **varnams** in its structural frame work but the cittasvara of svarajatis has a line of **Sollu** which are rendered musically like the 'Sollus' of the Nirupana.

Pada

**Tillānā**

The format has only one pada but Javali which is also an abhinaya item like pada but treating the theme of love in a lighter vein, is performed before **Tillānā**.

They do not find a place in the format.

**Slokam**

constitutes verses that are generally rendered in **rāgamālīka** but do not conform to any specific tala or time measure.

**Kavuttuvam** - Though it belongs to the realm of temple ritualistic dances, it is also performed as the preliminary item in the present **Bharatanatyam** recitals. Kavuttuvam is similar to the **kautta**, as it comprises both **sollukattu** and Sahitya.

**Maṅgalam**

Hence, the origin of some of the dance numbers figuring in the Sadir Katcheri are traceable to very distant past. The format has been ever changing since the times of Chola, Nayak upto the Maratha period. From the foregoing analysis and a comparative study of the Nirupana and Sadir format, it can be construed that the Nirupana format was crystallised and systematised by the Tanjore Quartette into Sadir - format which is being followed even today in the Bharatanatyam recitals. Though Tanjore Quartette did not bring about any seminal changes, they effected certain qualitative and quantitative changes such as -

- (1) Quantitative change :- Reducing the number of the items, thereby minimising the duration of the recital.
- (2) Avoided the duplication of items in the format.
- (3) Qualitative change:- Retaining the essentials of the Nirūpana, the format gave a new look without diluting its quality.
- (4) By adopting different themes, ragas and tālas to the compositions, dispensed the monotony experienced in the Nirūpana.
- (5) The refined format exhilarated the dance recital acclaiming the status enjoyed by the chamber music.

Hence, it demonstrates that the Tanjore Quartette after examining and critically evaluating the format of Nirupana, have launched the Sadir format which remains with undiminished importance till date.

## CHAPTER IV

### Contribution of court composers and Musicians to the Development of Sadir

The reign of Raja **Serfoji-II** coincides with the august age of music and dance. Most of the accomplished musicians of 19th century, that South Indian history of music and dance has recorded, can be traced to Tanjorean nucleus. It is learnt that around 360 musicians and performers of repute who had distinguished themselves in different facets of the art of music (vocal and instrumental music) and dance were patronised by Serfoji who served as talisman of these artists of the period. In addition to their frequent performances in the court, each vidvān out of the 360 musicians had the unique privilege to perform only once in a year in the royal presence in order to prove his mettle and uphold his dignity among the galaxy of honoured musicians in the court.

Hence, such an intensely rich musical and dance activity had its skilled influences felt on other princely courts of India in general and South India in particular. The Tanjorean aptitude for music and dance made its head way through rest of the southern provinces and many a musician of other regions had flocked to this seat of art either to further their musical knowledge or as a means to compare their scholarship with their counter parts at Tanjore. If one were to get a list of the names of these super abundant composers, their biographical details and importantly their fabulous compositions, a research on the subject of their contribution to music and dance, would indeed become a lifetime, laborious and not the least a worthy study. Yet, with available data the contribution of some of the court musicians to the development of Sadir is as follows:



## I TANJORE QUARTETTE:

At the mention of the place Tanjore as one gets to remember the monumental temple of cholas - The 'Brhadīśvarālaya', so also the term **Sadir/Bharatanatyam** flashes across the minds of the practitioners of the art and its connoisseurs, the names of these illustrious dance masters, Cinnayya, Ponnayya Sivanandam and **Vadivelu** popularly known as Tanjore Quartette. They deserve the greatest credit as trend setters for **systematising** the Sadir dance by patterning the format for the recital, based on a methodical, aesthetic and artistically conceived progression of dance numbers which is still followed to this day. In this direction, they have not only breathed new life into the art of Sadir but their voluminous compositions are indeed a pulsating life force for the art. Hence every practitioner of Bharatanatyam would with reverence remember the names of these gems of Tanjore which have become synonymous with the art - Sadir - Bharatanatyam. Though not much biographical details are known about the ancestors of Tanjore Quartette, their family **genealogy**<sup>(1)</sup> can be traced to Mahādeva Annavi, Gangaimuthu and Rāmaliṅgam brothers who belonged to **the** well documented period of Tulaja-II. These brothers hailed from Tirunelvely village near Tanjore and belonged to Oduvar family. attached to **Seṅgannār** Temple. They had good mastery over the science and art of dancing and were equally gifted singers. Among the brothers, Gangaimuthu was blessed with two sons, Subbarayan and Cidambaram. The Tanjore Quartette were the sons of Subbaraya Oduvar. It is learnt that once when King Tulaja - II visited the Sengannar temple

(1) **Tanjore Sri K. P. Kittappa Pillai** - "Bharata Isaivum Tanjai nālvarum" published by Department of Music, Tamil University; **Tanjore**, 16.3.93, P.5

(the shrine of Lord Siva), he was captivated by the soulful rendering of Tevaram songs by Subbaraynattuvar. Fascinated by his extraordinary musical talents, the King ordered his transference to the Tanjore Big Temple, where he was assigned the duties of not only reciting the Tevaram hymns but also as dance teacher both at the temple and at the court.

**Gangaimuthu**, the grandfather of Tanjore Quartette is said to have written many Navasandhi and **Pañcamūrti Kavuttuvams** in his work 'Natanadi Vadya Ranjanam'. Pancamurti **Kavuttuvam**, as the name suggests is a collection of **five** Kavuttuvams set to ghana **rāgas** in praise of five deities of the Hindu pantheon.

They are as follows:

<u>Deity</u>	<u>Rāga</u>	<u>Tala</u>
1. Vinayakar	Natai	Adi
2. Subramanya	<b>Goula</b>	Catusra Eka
3. <b>Sambandar</b>	Arabhi	Sarva Laghu
4. <b>Candikeśvara</b>	<b>Srirāgam</b>	Catusra Eka
5. Nataraja	<b>Varāli</b>	Sarva Laghu

These ritualistic dances were performed specially during the temple annual festivals when the deity was taken out in ceremonial procession.

The Nava Sandhi Kavuttuvams are compositions invoking the presiding deities of the nine directions such as Brahma, **Indra**, Agni, Yama, Nirutti, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera and Isanya, which were performed for the successful completion of Brahmotsvas without any hurdles. The composition begins with Jati followed by Sahitya in praise of the deity. These ritualistic dances were performed in accordance with the rules prescribed in the **Āgamaśāstra** and hence for each of the Kavuttuvams, the raga,



No.37 Sri Ponnayya and Sri Cinnayya

No.38 Sri Sivanandam with his wife



No.39 Maharaja Svati Tirunal and Sn Vadivelu



No.40 Ivory Violin presented to  
Sri Vadivelu by Maharaja Svati Tirunal.

tala, instrumental music, **Nr̥ttam** (pure dance), **Hastam** (Hand gestures) pleasing the particular deity as mentioned in the sastra were only chosen. For example Brahma Sandhi Kavuttuvam, the jatis set to **Brahmā** tala were recited followed by **kamala nr̥ttam**, the **laya vādyam** in caccatputatala, **gitam** in madhyamavati raga and pan or melody in **mēgha** raga were employed. After invoking the nine deities, at the instruction of the temple priest, 18 instruments were played in unison which marked the completion of the Kavuttuvam. It is learnt that these Kavuttuvams were performed as dance numbers until the times of Sabhapati and Mahadevan nattuvanar, the sons of Sivanandam (one of the Tanjore Quartette), but later such a practice was dispensed with. In addition to these ritualistic compositions of Gangaimuttu, his son Subbaraya Oduvar is accredited with **varnas** in praise of his patron King Tulaja-II. As a token of appreciation of their services both at temple as well as in the court, the King is said to have gifted a spacious house situated at the west main street at Tanjore for the permanent settlement of the musicians and their representatives in line. Eminent guru Sri Kittappa, the 5th descendant of Tanjore Quartette is residing in this house named as "Ponnayya Nilayam".

#### Early life and Training:-

Cinnayya, the eldest of the Quartette was born in the year 1802, Ponnayya in 1804, Sivanandam in 1808 and Vadivelu in 1810. At a very young age, the brothers had received sound training in the sphere of Laksana and Laksya of the art of dancing, from Gangaimuttu and Subbarayan. These brothers furthered their musical knowledge under the able guidance of Śri Muttusvami Diksitar, the great composer, Court musician and one of the Trinity of South Indian music. Their 7-1/2 years of Gurukulavasa made them the rich beneficiaries of learning the

intricacies involved in the art which is evident from their compositions marked for their **dhātu-mātu** samanvaya (perfect Symbiosis of music(dhātu) and **Sāhitya(mātu)**).

The worthy guru Sri Muttusvami **Diksitar**, discerning the extraordinary musical worth in these rising musicians, conferred on them the title "Bharata Sresta". There could be no greater encomium and appellation than the one given by a guru of such artistic **eminence**. **Rāja Serfoji-II** is said to have presented a cash award of Rs.5000 to Sri Diksitar for training the pupils in such a fine and unsurpassing way. The illumined disciples, as a form of Guru daksina specially composed and offered the **navaratnamālīka kṛti**, comprising the sparkling gems of nine compositions(**Kṛti**) starting with the first kṛti "**mayātita svarūpini**" in mayamalava gōula raga with the guruguha **mudra**. The other eight kṛtis have the signature guruguha **dasa**, guruguha **mūrti** and guruguha **bhakta**. Sri Muttusvami Diksitar was an ardent devotee of Lord **Subrahmanya(guruguha)** and mother Goddess. He had adopted the signature guruguha in his compositions and the Quartette have aptly used this as they considered their guru to be the incarnation of the Divine (Guruguha) and hence addressed themselves as the servants of their master (**Guruguhadāśa**). The Navaratnamalika Kṛtis which sound like Guru stuti seem to be the most befitting tribute that could be best offered to a guru of such exuberance of scholarship coupled with high degree of spirituality. A noteworthy feature of the Tanjore Quartette opting for the **mayāmālava** gōula raga for their maiden composition can be **attributed** to two possible reasons, firstly owing to the auspicious nature of the raga which has been hitherto utilised for the beginners in vocal music in learning the preliminary exercises **and** secondly, the fact that this raga was adopted by their guru for his first composition 'Sri Nathadiguruguho **jayati**', who had attained

unparalleled eminence in the domain of music. Though the composition "mayatita svarūpini"<sup>(1)</sup> is in praise of their personal Goddess Brhadisvari, the brother's humbleness and reverential attitude towards their Guru is evident from the verse "Satileni ma guruguha mūrtiki rie dasudaiti" which meekly states that they have become the servants to their unmatched guru who is none other than the incarnation of Lord Guruguha. Such a similar note is reflected in Pallavi and Anupallavi sections of another Krti in Dhenuka rāga<sup>(2)</sup> which conveys that it is because of their sincere prayers offered at the feet of Lord Brhadisvara that they were fortunate enough to have been blessed by the God with a Guru whom they considered as the embodiment of Lord Subrahmanya.

Pallavi :- Sri Guruguhamūrtikinēśiṣyudai yunnanura

Anupallavi:- Baguganu Sri Brhadisvara padambulanu  
nijambuganu bajincinanductane.

The Tanjore Quartette were ardent devotees of Lord Brhadisvara and they signed many of their compositions with the mudra Brhadisvara or Brhadisvari, the consort of the presiding deity of the Big temple. An anecdote relating to the composition in Sankarābharanam raga. testifies to the brothers' unstinted faith in their personal Goddess Brhadiśvari. It is learnt that when Vadivelu, the youngest brother was suffering from acute illness, his other siblings prayed their goddess so intensely to save their brother from the jaws of death and consequently Vadivelu is said to have recovered, as though the prayers of the brothers were answered. The poetic lines 'Mahēśvari mādhasasōdari mahātripura sundari ma sahodaruni raksimcumu" and another krti in Madhyamavati with the

(1) K.P. Kittappa and K.P. Sivanandam - Ed. - 'Taniaperuvudaiyan Pērisai', Published by Ponnayya Kaliagam, Madras. 1964 - P.60.

(2) Ibid - P.62

phrase “mununāṭōti bhaktuni brōcina, Brhadīsunirāni” amply justify the above mentioned anecdote. With the passage of time, the Tanjore Quartette in addition to their hereditary rights in the temple ritualistic services, were also privileged to function as musicians and dance teachers in the court of Raja Serfoji-II. In addition to the Sadir dance, all the four brothers were proficient in Hindustani dance also. The King held them in very high esteem and in appreciation of their talents and services, the royal patron is said to have constructed a rest house called “nattuvanār cāvadi” near the Big temple.

They composed many varnas, in praise of Raja Serfoji and his son Śivāji-II. They were scholars in Tamil and Telugu and composed with ease in these languages. Interestingly for the same varna mettu or the musical setting, we find corresponding Sahitya in Tamil and Telugu languages for many of the pada varnas.

Unfortunately such an amicable relationship between the King and the Quartette did not long last on account of the favouritism shown by Raja Serfoji towards a boy whom we understand was very intimate to him. For the boy's training in the art of dancing, the King is said to have requisitioned the services of Vadivelu. We further infer from the oral tradition that it was a customary practice of the King to felicitate the Quartette on every Cittirai-Tiruvizha. This was considered to be the greatest honour done only to Tanjore Quartette. But in gross violation of this practice, King Serfoji instead of felicitating the Quartette, honoured the boy for his excellence and proficiency in the art. Adding to this great **humiliation**, Rāja is stated to have curtailed their privileges relating to temple services, hitherto enjoyed by them. This had not only made the brothers especially Vadivelu unhappy but also became a

compelling reason to leave the Tanjore court. Yet, according to Prince **Tulajendra**<sup>(1)</sup>, the Tanjore Quartette on account of their refusal to follow the usual practice of the court traditions to stand and perform before the royal presence, incurred royal displeasure. Consequent upon this, the Tanjore Quartette deported to Orathanadu village and later were invited by Travancore King Svati **Tirunāl** to his court. It is learnt that **SvātīTirunāl** gave a lumpsum of Rs.700 on their arrival, presumably by way of their travelling **expenses**<sup>(2)</sup>. The departure created a void in the Tanjore court and Raja Serfoji, re-welcomed the brothers but to his utter dismay, only Ponnayya, Sivānandam and Cinnayya accepted the invitation and Cinnayya later migrated to Mysore and became the Samasthana Vidvan in the court of Kṛṣṇarāja Wadiyar-III. Vadivelu showed no signs of reconciliation with Raja Serfoji and settled back at Travancore as the court musician of Mahārāja Svati Tirunal. Raja Svati **Tirunāl** is stated to have constructed a spacious building called 'Sankara Vilasa' situated in Sālai Street, Travancore, for the Tanjore Quartette. The brothers during their stay at Travancore improved and systematised the art of dance in the region on the lines of Sadir and it is considered that the Kerala version of Sadir is what is called as “Mohiniāttam”, the beautiful dance of the enchantress.

Each of the brothers had their unique contribution to the development of Sadir. An interesting feature of the Tanjore Quartette is that they co-ordinated their diverse talents and worked as a single **unit** in producing their compositions until their stay in Tanjore upto 1830.

Their compositions are noted for their raga bhava and Sahitya bhava.

(1) Interview with **P.Tulajendra** Raja Saheb, dated 25-4-94, Thanjavur.

(2) **Dr.S.Verikita Subramonia Iyer** - '**Svati Tirunal And His Music**' ; Published by College Book House, **Trivandrum**, 1975, P. 157.



Simplicity, elegance, numerous verbo-musical embellishments and easy diction with sweet sounding words are special features of their s̄ahitya. The intricately embroidered patterns of rhythmical designs in the pure dance numbers are fine illustratives of the technical pieces in dance. Their pada varnas saturated with madhura bhakti are simply splendid compositions which stand as monuments to their creative genius. Some of the compositions of Tanjore Quartette are also in praise of Lord Tyagesa of Tiruvarur, Rājagopāla of Mannārguḍi and Padmanabha svami of Tiruvananthapuram. Their extensive repertoire includes Alarippu in five jatis, Jatisvarams, Sabdams, pada varnas, a padam, raga mālīkas, svarajatis and Tillanas. Few have been published and the vast treasure of compositions are yet to see the light of the day.

(1) Cinnavva:- He was a versatile dancer, accomplished dance teacher and also a good composer. He had written many compositions in praise of his patron, King Kṛṣṇa Raja Wadiyar-III (1797-1868) (who was invariably the Nāyaka of many of his varnas). The tana varna “Nivantisāmi” in Kamalāmanōhari raga, pada varna “Calamujēsītē” in Ananda bhairavi raga and “Emaguva bhodiñcerā” in Dhanyasi raga and Sabdam ‘Gokulāmbudi’ in Kāmbhoji, miṣṛacāpu tāla are in praise of King Kṛṣṇa Raja Wadiyar. For the varna mettu of Ananda bhairavi pada varna, there is Tamil Sahitya ‘Sakhiyē inda vglayil’ and another Telugu Sahitya “Pantamu Jēsiti”<sup>(1)</sup>. His Tillānā ‘Nadir tomdir tadhim’ in Begada also in praise of King Kṛṣṇa Raja Wadiyar is quite an interesting dance number. He is also accredited with several krtis, which are dedicated to Goddess Camundēsvari.

In addition to these compositions, the authorship of good many Javalis

(1) K.P. Kittappa and K.P. Sivānandam - ‘Ponnayya mani mālīkai’ - The Dance compositions of the Tanjore Quartette; Published by S.Ratnaswāmy Chettiar, Chidambaram - 1992, P. 115

all in praise of the Mahārāja of Mysore Sri Camaraja Wadiyar, are ascribed to Cinnayya, which have been edited by Sri Kitappa Pillai in the book 'Javalis of Sri Cinnayya'". It is quite evident that Cinnayya was a court Vidvān of King Kṛṣṇaraja Wadiyar-III and most of his Varnas, Sabda and a Tillana are in praise of the King, but in the Javalis attributed to Cinnayya, none are eulogistic of his royal patron which is quite astonishing.

If it is to be believed that Cinnayya, to have had written these Javalis in praise of Kṛṣṇarāja Wadiyar's father Camaraja Wadiyar leaving behind his son, the chronological date of King Camaraja do not substantiate this as Kṛṣṇaraja Wadiyar was himself installed on throne in 30-6-1799 and his rule extended upto 19-10-1831. Another corroborating factor is that Cinnayya is said to have migrated to Mysore after 1830-31 only. And also the assumption that Cinnayya is supposed to have written these Javalis in praise of Camaraja Wadiyar(1868-1894\*), the son of Kṛṣṇarāja Wadiyar-III, a minor Prince then, does not stand to reasoning in as much as Cinnayya. according to late Prof. Sāmbamūṛthy<sup>(2)</sup> lived upto the year 1856. This rather leads us to assume that these Javalis might have been written by some other composer, perhaps by the famous Javali composer Pattābhirāmayya(circa-1863) whose Javalis are said to have attracted Sri Camaraja Wadiyar (1868-1894), who appointed him in the controller's office at Mysore. But this is also rather confusing since Javalis mentioned in the book (Javalis of Sri Cinnayya) do not carry the signature 'Talavana' of Pattābhirāmayya. Yet this does not

(1) Tanjore K.P.Kittappa, ed. Javalis of Sri Cinnayya., Published by Ponnayya Nāṭyaśāla, Bangalore, 1979.

• According to Sri Kittappa, Cinnayya was patronised by king Kṛṣṇa Raja Wadiyar and Cāmarāja Wadiyar - Information elicited from the interview with Sri Kittappa, Dated 28-4-94

(2) P.Sāmbamūṛthy - 'A Dictionary of South Indian Music and Musicians' - Vol.-I, The Indian Music Publishing House. P.88.



No.41

The Dance hall at Ponnayya  
Nilayam, Thanjavur



No.42

Manuscripts of Dance compositions of  
Tanjore Quartette.



No.43

The research scholar interviewing  
Guru Kittappa Pillai

preclude the assumption that Pattabhiramayya might not have signed these compositions with **mudra 'Tālavana'** as, perhaps these might have been dedicated to King Cāmarāja Wadiyar(son of King Kṛṣṇaraja Wadiyar-III), his patron. In the history of music and dance we have such parallels for example, among the bulk of Kṣetrayya **padas**, there are few padas which carry the name of Vijayaraghava Nayaka, one of the patron-kings of Kṣetrayya. Apparently, these padas donot bear the signature '**muṁvagaṇā** of Kṣetrayya'.

Hence the authorship of these Javalis seems to be a matter of great detail and needs further probing.

(2) **Ponnayya:-** (1804) He was head and shoulders above the others as a composer<sup>0</sup> and as pioneer in systematising the technique and format of Sadir. He is said to have included **mēlaprāpti** and **Tōḍayamaṅgalam**, in the format which preceded the dancer's first appearance on the stage. Though most of the compositions are collectively authored by the **Quartette**,<sup>(2)</sup> Ponnayya deserves an honoured place as a versatile composer among the brothers and probably due to this very reason the authorship of compositions in general are accredited to him and hence the name "Ponnayya manimalai" the title of the book\* which is the collection of compositions of Tanjore Quartette.

Ponniah had equipped the repertoire of Sadir with bountiful compositions ranging from **Alāriṇṇu** to **Tillānā**. His extempore versifying ability is best evidenced from the anecdote relating to the maiden performance (**araṅgētram**) of the pada **varna** in Bhairavi raga eulogising his patron

(1) T Sankaran - **Tanjore Quartette** - The Hindu dated March 25th. 1970.

(2) **Interview** with Sri Kittappa. Dated 28-4-94.

• The book also incorporates few compositions of Prof. K. Ponnayya, a **great** musician and father of Sri **Kittappa** Pillai.

King **Serfoji-II**. During the hey days of royalty, it was a customary practice, for composers especially the court musicians to present the **arangetram** of their compositions amidst scholars and exponents of art. Ponnayya, abiding by this rule, presented the pada varna "Ni satidora ledani" in Bhairavi raga, rūpaka tala. But a court musician named Ustād Kes'av took serious objection to the phrasing of the words "lēdani", which according to him negated the corporeity of the King in his very presence. Even though the verse amounted only in glorifying the unsurpassed greatness of the King, as one equalled to none, yet Ponnayya, leaving no room for unpleasantness replaced the phrase 'Nivani' for 'ledani', purporting the assertion of Raja's supremacy. The spontaneity with which he substituted the phrase reveals his ingenious versifying ability and his sagacity in dealing with the phraseology, that go to make a fine Sahitya. The Anupallavi of this **varnam** is as follows

Bhosalakula Sri Tulajendruni tanaya  
bhoga devendrudou Sarabhendracandra

The last carana svara of this **varnam** is set in four ragas namely Kalyani. Kāmbhōji, Tōdi and Mōhana.

Likewise, another Tana varnam '**Kanakāṅgi**' in Todi raga. Khanda ata tala is in the name of King Serfoji-II. The anupallavi of this varnam is as follows :

Tanatodaina Sri Tulajendruni tanayudaina  
Sri Sarabhoji maharajendra

Ponnayya had written many Tana **varnas** and Couka varnas. His compositions are marked for its simplicity in style, sweetness of melody and the lyrical content mostly reflects devotion to Lord Brhadiśvara and his guru Sri **Muttusvāmi** Diksitar. We find the compositions of Ponnayya written both in Telugu and Tamil. He had composed many **rāgamālikas**

like his guru Sri Muttusvami Diksitar. Ponnayya's **rāgamālīka** compositions have the **raga mudra** or the names of the ragas embedded in the Sahitya, in such a way that they connote a definite meaning to the lyrical portion. His catur-raga **ślokamālīka**<sup>(1)</sup> in **rūpaka tāla**, is a composition in Telugu set to four ragas namely, Bilahari, Varali, Purvi Kalyāṇi and Dhanyasi.

A similar **catur-rāgamālīka** using the same **varna mettu** has been composed by Maharaja Svati Tirana] in Sanskrit beginning with the line "Bilahari **pada padma**".

For the dvadasa raga **mālīka** in Telugu, he had employed 12 ragas, which are as follows:-

- |             |                |              |               |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| (1) Todi    | (2) Mōhanam    | (3) Srirāgam | (4) Gowri     |
| (5) Varali  | (6) Sourashtra | (7) Kalyani  | (8) Sahana    |
| (9) Kannada | (10) Nata      | (11) Surati  | (12) Hussaini |

Initially Ponnayya had composed only in three ragas, but on the instruction of his Guru, he is said to have added string of 9 more melodies to it. This is evident from the third raga "Sri" which is usually utilised as Mangala raga for conclusion and we also find the mudra in the Sahitya "Bhūmi velaya Sri Tanja Brhadisa...

A list of some of the compositions of Ponnayya is given below

(a) Jatisvaram:

	<b><u>Rāga</u></b>	<b><u>Tala</u></b>
(1)	Toḍi	Ādi
(2)	<b>Sankarābharanam</b>	Misracapu
(3)	<b>Khamās</b>	Tis'ra Ekam
(4)	Saveri	Tis'ra Ekam

(1) Ponnayyamanimālai - P. 162.

(5)	Rāgamālika	Misracapu
(6)	Hemāvati	Misracāpu
(7)	Vasantha	Tis'ra ekam

(b) Sabdam:

<u>Composition</u>	<u>Raga</u>	<u>Tala</u>
(1) Sadayudane Satatamu ninnu valaci vaccinadanara	Kāmbhoji	Misracapu
(2) Sāmininne cāla nammiti is in praise of Lord Rama	Kambhoji	Misracapu
(3) In, Srikara Sugunākara, the <b>mudra</b> is not very clear as it ends with Namaha Prabho	Kambhoji	Misracapu
(4) Niratamuna ni bhajana <b>manasa</b>	Kambhoji	Misracāpu

(c) Pada varna:

<u>Composition</u>	<u>Rāga</u>	<u>Tala</u>
(1) Adimōham Konden	Sankarābharanam	Adi
(2) Sāmi na pai daya	Danyasi	Adi
(3) Sāmini rammanave	Bhairavi	Adi
(4) Manavi cekonarādā (In this he has adopted Notusvaras)	Sankarabharanam	Adi

(d) Tillānā:

<u>Composition</u>	<u>Raga</u>	<u>Tāla</u>
(1) Danidir dhiratanitom	Tōdi	Adi
(2) Dhīm tana nanatāni udana thim	Hamsanandi	Rupakam
(3) Nadir dir <b>dir</b> torn	Mandari	Adi

His svara **padam** "Danisansamani" in Todi raga, is a **fine** example of the **Verbo-musical** embellishment called **Svarāksarā**, in which the **solfa**

notes of music are identical with its corresponding syllable in the lyric. Using such an artistic device, is considered as Himalayan task for composers and bespeaks of the lyricist's profound knowledge in the science of music and **sāhitya**.

Ponnayya is said to have trained many dancers during his period. He lived upto 60 years. Ponnayya had two daughters, his nephew **Suryamūrti** nattuvanar who was in the temple service of Pasupatisvara shrine at Pandanallur, is said to have married **Ponnayya's** daughter and the eminent dance master late Sri Minaksisundaram pillai (1869-1954), was the grand son of Ponnayya.

(3) **Sivanāndam**:-

He was indeed a **fine** composer, good Vainika (Vina player) and above all a very good natyacarya, who was known for his expertise in teaching abhinaya to his students. Being an accomplished dancer himself, he encouraged men to learn the art of dancing which was considered as an revolutionary **aspect**, in those days. As per the traditional norms of the period, only women were privileged to take to the art of dancing and men, though adept in the art, were restricted to hold the status of a dance teacher or were permitted to take to either vocal or instrumental music.

It is learnt that, at the request of Sivanandam, King **Sivāji-II** is said to have constructed a separate hall inside the palace so that men could also learn and practice the art. Among his disciples who popularised the art of male dancing was one Subbaraya **Pandāram**, who is stated to have brought laurels to his guru.

For the benefit of his students, in memorising the different hand gestures, he had devised many **teaching** -learning methods in the form



of visual aids by painting the Samyuta and Asamyuta Hastas (Combined and Single hand gestures) on the walls of Silambakūdam or practice hall.

Sivanandam had many compositions to his credit, the famous pada varna "Daniketagujana" in Todi Raga, Rupaka tala is one such master-piece. Muttusvami Diksitar, who happened to witness the presentation of this pada varna when conducted by Sivanandam, is stated to have lauded the achievement of his disciple in composing such a marvelous varna which according to him ranked much superior for its musical setting compared to the varna "Rūpamujūci" composed by him in the same raga. We learn that, the varna "Rūpamujūci" in Todi raga was composed by Muttusvāmi Diksitar at the request made by the Tanjore Quartette.

The compositions Sarasa Sikhāmani in Kalyāṇi raga, rupaka tala and Pantamēlanāsāmi in Ananda Bhairavi raga. ādi tala are in praise of Raja Sivaji and his minister Mallarji respectively. The unpublished varnam "Sarōjāksulu Nivani" in Kalyani raga, rupaka tala and sabdam 'Venvuda" in Kāmbhoji are in praise of his family deity Sri Raja Gopālasvāmi. Both the Kalyani raga varnas have the same musical setting. The sabdam 'Venyuda' was a popular item in the repertoire of dance numbers of late Smt. Bālasarasvati. Apart from his dance compositions for Sadir, Sivanandam also worked in equipping the repertoire of temple ritualistic dances. He prescribed the rhythmic structure for the nrtya as well as the instrumental music for these dances and he was a pioneer for introducing abhinaya for the Sahitya passages of Kavuttuvams, which were till then performed only as pure dance numbers unaccompanied by abhinaya. In addition to this, he had also suggested the procedure for the rhythmic sounding of the temple bells during deepārādana or rituals involved in lighting and waving of the lamps in front of the deity.

He also developed the temple dance at Pasupatisvara temple at **pandanallūr** village with the help of his nephew Suryamurti nattuvanar who was attached to this shrine.

(4) **Vadivelu**:- Being the youngest of the Tanjore Quartette, Vadivelu became the **Samasthāna** Vidvan at a tender age of fourteen in **Serfoji's court**<sup>(1)</sup>. He was also one of the ablest court musicians of Raja Svati Tirunal. **Vadivēlu** along with **Bālusvāmi** Diksitar (brother of Sri **Muttusvāmi** Diksitar) was instrumental in introducing violin in the South Indian chamber music. It is said that 'Vadivelu was Sri Tyagaraja's violinist for sometime and that the saint musician used to listen in rapt ecstasy to the divine strains that flowed from the fingers of **Vadivēlu**'<sup>(2)</sup>. The facility and skill with which he handled the instrument, made him the recipient of many royal honours, among which the presentation of ivory violin by Svati Tirunal is notable. This instrument is still preserved in Tanjore as valuable possession by the descendants of the Tanjore Quartette. Svati Tirunal who was himself a royal musician of high repute "found in Vadivelu, a worthy consultant and a ready collaborator in his compositions for Bharatanaryam like the varnas, svarajatis, padas and tillānās"<sup>(3)</sup>. Vadivelu, like his illustrious brothers composed Sabdams, varnas, padas and other technical pieces in music, in praise of lord **Padmanābha Svāmi**, the family deity of Travancore rulers. It is learnt that, a danseuse **Kanakamālā** of Tanjore, who seems to have been the disciple of Vadivelu, was awarded Rs.300/-<sup>(4)</sup> for her performance in the court of Svati Tirunal. Some of

(1) **Tanjai Peruvudavan Pēriśai** - P.2

(2) **T.Sankaran** - 'Last of the Tanjore Quartette', The Hindu dated April 5th, 1970.

(3) **Dr.S.Venkita Subramonia** her - 'Svati Tirunāl and His Music'. P. 158

(4) **Svati Tirunāl and His Music**. P. 166.

the dancers who were the disciples of Vadivelu came over to Travancore and were on regular pay roll in the court and also were privileged to dance at the Padmanabha Svāmi temple. Vadivelu's varied talents made him very intimate to Raja SvatiTirunal. The King is said to have sanctioned Rs.700/- from the royal treasury as a gift to Vadivelu in connection with his adopted daughter's marriage. "In spite of all these, there was a short period during which Vadivelu was denied audience with the Mahārāja for some unknown reason. But at the intervention of Paramēśvara Bhagavatar and Iravivarman Tampi, the two were reconciled and out of gratitude Vadivelu composed a varnam in Nāta raga in praise of the royal composer and presented it in a dance concert before him. At the end of the concert, the Maharaja appreciated Vadivelu's skill displayed in the song as well as its presentation in the court but as an anti-climax, as it were, warned him not to use it again. Vadivelu was perplexed and begged to be pardoned for any mistake he might have inadvertently committed. The Maharaja replied: your song is in praise of me, it must have been in His (God's) praise, music is not worth its name if it has any lower aim. Vadivelu submitted to the King that he had sung in praise of the Maharajas of several other states and that he had done the same in his court as the King is the visible God (Raja Pratyaksa Daivam). The Maharaja curtly told him that in any case Sri Padmanabha is God and none else. The next day Vadivēlu presented the same varnam with a changed Sahitya praising Sri Padmanabha and won the King's appreciation. This is the Ata tāla varnam in Nata raga Sammukhamu Kanukontini ipudu saphalamunu kontira ipudu";<sup>(1)</sup> This tāna varnam (changed version) has been published in the book Peruvudaiyān Peris'ai, (a collection of the compositions of Tanjore Quartette) but its original Sahitya is not traceable.

(1) T.Sankaran - The Last of the Tanjore Quartette - The Hindu, dated April 5th. 1970.

Similarly, we come across several anecdotes relating to Vadivelu's exemplary scholarship in music.

Some of the **varnas** composed by Vadivēlu are as follows:

<u>Composition</u>	<u>Rāga</u>	<u>Tāla</u>
(1) Vanajaksa ninne nammiyunna	Saveri	Khanda Ata
(2) <b>Sarasijanābha</b>	Kambhoji	Khanda Ata
(3) <b>Calamēlajēsēvurā</b>	Sankarabharanam	Khanda Ata
(4) <b>Sammukhamu</b>	Nata	Ata
(5) <b>Sāmi nivēyani cāla</b> nammiti	Kalyani	Adi

Vadivelu died at a very young age of 37 years and within weeks, his royal friend and patron also left the mortal coil.

For most of the compositions authored in Sanskrit by SvātiTirunāl, we find its corresponding version of the Sahitya in Telugu composed by Vadivelu with the **mudra** " Padmanabha". Owing to the identical **mudra** or signature "Padmanabha" employed by the SvātiTirurial and Vadivelu, it has become a difficult task for scholars to distinguish their compositions.

In order to have a better understanding of the themes dealtwith in the dance compositions of the Tanjore Quartette, it would be worthwhile to study the poetic text of a composition belonging to three different genres in the format such as **Sabdam**, **Varnam** and **Javali**.

**Sabda:-** In the present day tradition, Sabdas are rendered in **rāgamālika**, each of the four poetic lines are usually set to rakti ragas which have greater emotional appeal. Most of the Sabdas composed by Tanjore Quartette are set to raga Kambhoji and **miśra** capu **tāla**. **Kāmbhoji**, being a raktiraga with its varied melodic improvisations facilitates in establishing and enriching the latent shades of the **nāyikā-nāyaka bhāva** and emotions contained in the Sahitya.

The thematic content of the Sabdas are either devotional or erotic in nature. As Sabda is an introductory item of expressional dance, the abhinaya in it has chosen limits of exposition. The usual 7 beat (**miśra** capu) tala adopted for the s'abdas are performed in brisk and fast moving tempo. This naturally restricts the elaborate epitomisation of the Sahitya and hence abhinaya in **sābdas** are always performed in a measured manner. Unlike **Varnam** or Pada the episodic dramatisation or Sancarīs in the Sabda are unwarranted and if the poetic lines demand for such an exposition, then it is invariably brief.

Sabda taken up for study is in Kambhoji raga and **miśra** capu tala. The pique of unrequited love of the Nayika is pursued as the theme of this **sābdam**. The language is simple and every line in the text ends with syllable in rhyme called **antyaprasa**. All the four lines of poetry have same musical tune or **Ekadhātu**. The Sahitya is in the form of monologue of the nayika who persuades the nayaka, Lord Rama to accept her as his beloved

- (1) **Svāmi** ninne **cāla** nammiti  
Nadu pai cala **mēlarā**
  - (2) Poncara Vilu **Vañcarā**  
**Saramiñcarā** daya **yuncara**.
  - (3) **Elarā** ne balara  
Nannelarā vagayelara
  - (4) **Elu** elu nannelu kora  
**Sabhāsure** **Kōdandapāni** Sallamure
- (1) The first line in the Sahitya conveys the synoptic outline of the theme in which the lady in love pleads her Lord (Sri **Rāmā**) not to be indifferent towards her as she has reposed abundant faith in him.

- (2) The Nayika tells her lord to (look) carefully bend the bow and requests him to be compassionate towards her by throwing his love glances at her. These lines also suggest the symbolic significance of the mighty bow-breaking episode mentioned in the epic Ramayana.
- (3) Here the Nayika says that she is a young girl (with plain and unpretentious bearing) and questions her lord as to why should he be so unsolicitous towards her and thus pleads him to accept her as his own.
- (4) The Nāyikā says "Rule and accept me Oh King hovering over the Sabha (court). To the Lord holding the bow Kodanda in the hand (Lord Rama), I salute".

Pada Varnam:- The Pada Varnam taken up for the study is a composition of **Sivānandam**, set to **raga** Kalyani, **rupaka tāla**. This is an unpublished varnam and the researcher had the opportunity to learn this composition from Guru Sri Kittappa Pillai, the descendant of Tanjore Quartette. The story content of this varnam is once again woven around the anguish and longing expressed by the love-lorn maiden for an ultimate union with the Nayaka who is none other than Lord Rajagopala, the presiding deity of **Mannārgudi** temple also known as **Daksina Dvāraka**.

The Nayika or the lady in love and the projection of different shades of her love by the composers and poets have been extended to suggest the symbolic representation of the human soul yearning for the merger with the Divine. The lofty ideal of this extended symbolism has been cherished as the essence of **madhura** bhakti or the supreme devotion to God through unalloyed love. The concept of Madhura Bhakti had its genesis in the compositions of saint poets in the Tamil region around 6-8th century A.D.

The contents of many a dance composition having definite libretto, be it **Sabdam**, **Varnam**, **Padam** or **Javali** depict **Vipralambha Sṛṅgāra** and the description of pangs of separation are usually in four types of monologue of either

- (1) **Nayika** addressing **sakhi** regarding the pangs of separation experienced by her.
- (2) **Sakhi** speaking on behalf of the **Nayika** to the **Nayaka** about the distressful state of the **Nayika** and requesting him to return to the **Nayika**.
- (3) The **Nayika** herself making a plea to the **Nayaka** to alleviate from her sufferings.
- (4) **Nayaka** expressing his unrequited love to the **Nayika**.

The heroine depicted in this **varna** is **Pragalbha Abhisarika\***.

The structure of this **varnam** is akin to any other **varna**, except that it has no corresponding **sihitya** for the last **carana**. The **pallavi** and **anupallavi** are usually in slow tempo compared to the **Carana** sections. The **pallavi** or the burden of the song in this **varnam** is more a declaration of the love by the **Nayika** who has come to meet her lord. The poetic line is marked with the **lyrico-musical** embellishment or **Svaraksara "Ni"** (**Nishada**) which is characteristic of the **Kalyāṇi raga**. The **anupallavi** section details the glory and entrancing beauty of **Lord Rajagopala**. while the rest of the song is the description of pangs of separation by the **Nayika** and a plea for union with her lover.

Unlike **Sabdam**, the **abhinaya** for the **Sahitya** of the **varnam** is interpreted in a leisured and elaborate manner using **Sancarīs**. Each of the refrain

- **Pragalbha** - She is a **matured woman**, who is able to express her ideas and love.  
**Abhisarika** - A heroine **intoxicated with** love, forsakes the conventions of modesty and goes out to **meet her** lover.

of poetic lines with different melodic variations of the raga are evocative of many interpretations which are helpful in the imaginative and creative choreography by the artiste using hastābhinaya and mukhajābhinaya, but the symbolic power of gestural interpretations should always be towered by the efficacy of Mukhaja and Sahajābhinaya or the natural and spontaneous expressions in communicating the subtle emotive connotations of the text which are indeed considered as the hall mark of abhinaya.

The Sahitya portion of the varnam in Kalyani raga, Rupaka tāla is as follows:-

Pallavi:-

Sarasijaksulu ni vani cāla ivela na svāmi ninnu Cera vaccitira

Oh! you, the lotus eyed Lord. (when passion overcame me)  
craving for your company, I have come unto you at this time.

Anupallavi:-

(a) Dharalo neradata vaina daksina Dvāraka vasa

The one dwelling in Daksina Dvaraka. you are the most  
generous person on this earth.

(b) Sarasuda nannela Soundarya gopāla

Being a man of good taste, be-take me oh gopala. endowed  
with entrancing and enchanting beauty.

Citta Svara Sahitya :-

Sare **konu** nannu nidu sogasu  
nadu galanu juci бага  
valapu solapu golupu vagalu  
bhramalo koni nannu birana  
**bahuvēlaga** Parāmukhamu Cēyakurā



Very often I see your handsome and elegant form within me(myheart), and am overcome by a surge of love and desire. Hence, please come soon and do not overlook me.

**Caranam :-**

Ganavidya loludai entanu ra

However much you may be enamoured by the art of music,  
do not forsake me.

**Carana Sahitya :-**

(1) **Jālamu** ikanunātōnu vaddu **rā**

(Please) do not play pranks with me any more.

(2) Marudu idō pulasaramu veyyaganu orvanugadara

Here the cupid(God of love) is showering flower-tipped  
arrows at me which I cannot endure.

(3) Janta kokilam ido

Kuyya ganu mirane

**Ika** talanu **tāmasamēlarā**

**vegame** napai

tagina **svāmi** ika bhrovara

The pair of cuckoos(love birds) here rend the air with their cooing sound which is extremely unbearable for me. I cannot withstand this separation anymore. Why this delay Oh my ideal Lord, come quickly and protect me.

with the Carana refrain "**GānaVidyā**——", this Varna comes to a satisfying close.

**Javali**:- The Javali 'Dani **bōdana**' is a composition of Ponnayya and is set to raga **Suruti** - Adi **tāla**. The Nayika of this Javali is a Pragalbha of **Khandita** type, one who is offended due to his lovers attachment for

another woman and chides him for his pranks. The Nayaka belongs to Vaisika category, i.e. one who associates and indulges with courtezans. The predominant rasa of this Javali is however sṛṅgāra of vipralambha type, but the viraha which is integral to sṛṅgāra, is not caused by the physical distance between the Nayika and Nayaka but indifference, neglect and the waywardness of the Nayaka and his relationship with other woman are the causative factors for the emotional distance. Under such conditions, the Nayika, apprehensive of her lover getting into the fold of the other damsel, initially requests him not to be led by her preachings. She is jealous of his intimacy with the other woman and is in a fury, slighted and when he does not entertain any sport of love from her, she chides and admonishes him. By such an act her lenience towards her lover also becomes explicit.

The composition has the same three limb structure of a pada - with Pallavi, Anupallavi followed by two caranas. The language of this Jāvali is simple and easily understandable. Musically the Suruti raga in all its tilting variations easily and effectively brings out the characteristic features of Khandita Nayika.

The composition is as follows:-

Pallavi:- Dani bhodana vina vaddura Sri Brhadīśvara

Do not heed or hear her preachings Oh! Brhadīśvara (Lord Siva)

Anupallavi:- Nannu bhāya nyāyamā ? Adiniku prēyamā?

Nannelara Brhadisvara!

Is it proper on your part to leave me alone and desert me?

Is she so lovable to you?

Accept me Oh! Brhadisvara.

Caranam:- Vaddajēri muddubetta vaccite

Gaddaliñci momarajesevu sami ||

When I come near you to kiss, Oh Lord you just turn your face with disapproval.

Adera? **Bhali** bhalira? auroura idi merā? Popōrā

Why is it? Oh is this very nice of you? Is this proper for you? Go go away.

Contribution of Tanjore Quartette to the development of Sadir in a nut-shell:-

The period of Tanjore Quartette in the realm of art music made considerable progress by the flowering of the genius of the musical Trinity, whose devotional out pourings in the form of Krtis gave new lease of life to {Carnatic music, resulting in the enrichment of the repertoire of the chamber music (concert pattern) and also elevating it to its zenith.

In all probability, this must have motivated the Tanjore Quartette, a felt-need to bring about such similar standards in Sadir making it a recital based one.

This called for the **systematisation** of the art in all respects, namely

(1) providing a specific vocabulary for the technique of the art.

Just as there are preliminary graded exercises for beginners in music called **Saralivarisa** or Saralisvaras. so also the Tanjore Quartette, improvised, developed the adavu system and established the pedagogy for Sadir. This logically planned series of dance units-adavus, have indeed created a concrete base and strengthened the intricate fabric of the dance, due to which we are able to enjoy and appreciate the highly fascinating rhythmic flourishes and the technical nuances involved in the dance.

- (2) Launching an aesthetically planned format capable of sufficing the needs and demands of chamber dance.

Tanjore Quartette, being intuitive artists and clever craftsmen carefully re-edited and designed the presentation order of the dance numbers in a recital, without swerving from the essentials laid down in the **Sampradāya**. The dance items, in all its logicity have been beautifully assembled in an artistic progression of the different genres such as Alarippu, **Jatisvaram**, **Sabdam**, **Varnam**, **Padam**, Javali and Tillana. Each though distinctive, strikes a synergistic balance by sharing the component aspects of music and dance in a creative manner.

Such an enriched and embellished format has the essentials of simple, orderly, logical continuity and meaningfully programmed sequence, and this has facilitated the dance in its-

- (a) Promotion of excellence
- (b) Preservation of valued traditions
- (c) Encouragement of innovation and adaptation

- (3) Popularising the **Prthagārtha** form, thereby expanding the configuration of interesting and variegated dance compositions in a recital.

- (4) Equipping the repertoire of Sadir with a treasure-trove of copious and captivating compositions.

Hence, such massive inputs of solid technique, artistic bunching of variety of dance numbers, escalating in its aesthetic appeal, supplemented by an inexhaustible number of magical compositions based on scientific and eclectic approach have given **Sadir-Bharatanatyam**, an Olympian stature among the classical dances of India. Hence in all respects Tanjore Quartette were the known front rankers in the **systematisation** of the Sadir of the 19th century.

Muvvallūr Sabhāpatavva:- In the dance music, padas occupy a privileged place in the realm of expressional dance or abhinaya. Obviously abhinaya always holds the textual meaning as its take off point. In this context, most of the padas are abound in *srīṅāra* rasa which treat the theme of love in a (dignified and respectable) and mystic way. Padas are the splendid specimens of erotic mysticism born out of the creative imagination of devout poets who have chosen the medium of 'Madhura bhakti' (devotion through love) in expressing their intense love and devotion to their personal gods. The 'Madhura bhakti' is the highest philosophy, which expounds the unison and identification of the devotee with the deity. The lofty ideals of Madhura bhakti enshrined in the libretto of most of the padas, echo the yearning of the individual soul (personified as Nayika), for an ultimate union with the Cosmic soul (Nāyaka) with the help of a Sakhi who is a symbolic representation of a guru or teacher in guiding the human soul in adopting the right path to fulfill its heart's desire. Though padas are expressed in an erotic medium, with the help of the romantic exploits of the Nāyikā-Nāyaka, the real import of the poetic text is above the physical sheath of *Srīṅāra* and are independent of the corporal and carnal attributes encased in it. This only signifies the ceaseless endeavours and the intense spiritual languish of the souls to get united with the real and the eternal. Thus the supreme reality has divinised the erotic episodes and the intimate relationship of 'Nayika-Nayaka' in the padas, ultimately elevating it from the level of physical and sensual to the plane of spiritual sublimation.

The concept of Madhura bhakti, conceiving God as the lover and human soul as lady in love (with the God) was nurtured by the Vaisnavite and s'aivite composers of the Tamil region. **Andāl's** Timppavai, Manickkavacagar's **Tiruvāchagam** and the Divyaprabandhas of Alvars are replete with such

Madhura bhava. Such a sublime approach of devotion to God through true love, seems to have had a varied and abundant impact on the later composers, namely Jayadeva, Annamacarya, Narayanatirtha, Ksetrayya and Chandidas whose compositions are saturated with Madhura bhakti.

Among the peerless composers of padas, the name of Kṣetrayya towers very high, whose lyrical genius has been universally acknowledged in the world of music and dance. The bulk of his innumerable padas, resembling the impregnable colossal structure of lyrico-musical fortress, are inexhaustible for its infinite shades of the Nāyikā -Nayaka bhāvas, both when the love is fulfilled (Sambhoga Srngara) or stands unrequited (Vipralambha Srngara).

Ksetrayya's inimitable padas have left an indelible stamp on subsequent composers of padas, among whom the name of Muwallur Sabhāpatayya stands prominent who has carved a niche for himself in the galaxy of the pada composers.

His padas are ranked as master pieces and are popularly performed in the **Bharatanatyam** recitals. Sabhapatayya, a Telugu mulakanadu vaidika Brahmin, was a native of Muvvallūr village in Tanjore district. He is also called as Muwanallur Sabhapatayya as Muwanallur is also another village in Tanjore district. As Ksetrayya dedicated his padas to Lord **Muvvagopāla** so was Sabhapatayya, a staunch devotee of Rājagopālasvāmi, the presiding deity of Mannargudi temple, who is the Nayaka of his padas. His padas reflect his irresistible love and irrepressible devotion to his personal God and naturally he signed his compositions with the **mudra** Rajagopala or gopala which is found either in the Anupallavi or the concluding carana of the padas.

As a composer, Sabhāpatayya's incredible power of imagination and his profound insights into the delicate, sensitive and variegated textures of human love are quite evident from his vivid artistic characterisation of the Nayika and the Nayaka in different situations which in reality well correspond and mirror the myriad moods and feelings experienced by the human being.

In his padas, one does not find a dichotomy between Saṅgita and Sahitya. The simple diction with its idiomatic phraseology, rhetorical beauty and exquisite musical setting with suitable selection of ragas in all its curves and glides, magnify the emotional subtleties and the all absorbing passions of the lover and the beloved are portrayed in a very sophisticated manner.

Each of his padas, is a pictured gallery of one type of Nayika in a particular state of love with the Nayaka. Lord Rājagopāla. The sakhi or the confidant of the Nayika is the sweetest imaginative concept of these composers. She has greater role to play as a mediator, expressing to the Nayaka either the anguish and agony experienced by the love lorn maiden due to her separation from him or may describe the many moods that love can evoke.

Among the available compositions of Sabhapatayya the padas 'Emātalādina' in Yadukula Kāmbhoji raga, in Tis'ra Triputa tala and 'Dārijūcucunnadi' in raga Sankarābharanam, miśra capu tala are the most popular items in the music and dance performances. The thematic content of the pada 'Emataladina' revolves round the viraha vipralambha śṛṅgāra and the Nāyikā is svīya<sup>(1)</sup> of Virahotkanthita type<sup>(2)</sup>.

- (1) Svīya - is a women who is upright and of good character.
- (2) Virahotkanthita is a heroine who suffers the pangs of separation from her lover and is alone. disturbed by his (Nayaka's) absence.

The ragas usually employed by pada composers are rakti ragas which enhance the appeal more towards 'affective' side than the 'cognitive domain'. In other words the ragas and its subtle nuances should suit and merge with the rasa or sentiment underlying the chosen theme in order to produce a heightened emotional effect resulting in an artistic and aesthetic alchemy.

In the pada 'Ematalādina', Sabhapatayya has employed Yadukulakambhoji raga which is usually considered to evoke the feelings like emotional distress, discontentment, tearful longing and languishing, etc., characteristic of viraha vipralambha srngara.

Some of the padas customarily begin with the Anupallavi section. The present pada taken up for the study starts with Anupallavi 'Tāmarasākṣa'. The logic behind such a practice is that in certain padas, the Anupallavi sets the tone for the entire poetic text and since it is rendered in a higher octave, compared to the Pallavi section, it produces more sound and registers greater impact on the listeners and viewers. Tradition has no doubt recognised this practice but the musical setting and thematic content of some of the padas have also readily yielded themselves for such a treatment. Some of the Ksetrayya padas stand as best illustrations to this view.

The composition of the pada 'Emātalādina' set to raga Yadukula Kāmbhoji and tāla Tisra triputa is as follows:-

Pallavi:-

Emātalādina ni mātālēgāni emijeppina eduradadura.

Anupallavi:-

Tāmarasākṣa ni veppudu vattoyani talavākilillugā nilabadu cunnadira



### Carana(1):-

Kannula niru kaluvalai parera kanta virahagni **kanakūdadura**  
Ninnedabasi **aranimisamōrvadurā** vanyakada orori valadana vaddura.

|| Emātalādina||

### Carana(2):-

Manasu kimpaina sommulu pettadura marimari heccaina koka kattadura  
**Tanuvuna āhāranidralu muttadurā tālumanina** dhairyamu puttadura

|| Emātalādina ||

In this pada the musical setting of the **carana** is the sum of the music of Pallavi and Anupallavi sections.

This **padam** is a monologue of Sakhi who describes the love pangs and the distressful state of the love-lorn maiden to the Nayaka or Lord Rajagopala, the glorified hero of Sabhapatayya's padas. In the Anupallavi, the sakhi addressing the nayaka, as the lotus eyed one (Tāmarasāksa) conveys to him that the nayika is standing at the main threshold of her house, making it her abode (talavāki-lillugā) and is eagerly waiting to receive 'Him'.

In the Pallavi section, the qualities and actions of the love stricken Nāyikā are described. The sakhi tells the Nayaka that "whatever and whenever the nayika speaks, it is always about you and she will never oppose or contradict you, whatsoever you may say". The carana draws heavily upon the earlier phrases and reinforces the import of the anupallavi and pallavi sections, thereby accentuating the emotional intensity of the pangs of separation. Describing the miserable plight of the Nāyikā, the friend says that "she(heroine) is burning with the fever of separation and her tears incessantly flow like a stream and it is not proper for a beautiful girl to endure such an untold agony. Oh! the handsome one, do not refuse and reject her anymore as she cannot bear this separation from you even for a moment".

In the second carana, she further describes that "the Nayika does not wear the ornaments pleasing to her and does not adorn herself with extremely expensive clothes, she refuses to touch even food or drinks and she cannot sleep and when asked to endure, she doesn't show courage. All her thoughts are entirely focused upon you, hence please come and redress her grief, (Oh! Rajagopāla)"; The last carana has the **mudra** 'Rajagopāladeva', incorporated in it.

In the phraseology and sentiment, Sabhapatayya has sincerely followed Ksetrayya as one finds similar idiomatic expressions such as "Talavakili illuga" in Ksetrayya pada 'Attevundevusumi - na prana riadha' in Ghantarava raga, Adi tala, where it is phrased in the carana as "Vanajaksa nividaku vaccēdāka tala vakile illu sumi ! Na prana nadha', which means until you turn up, the main gate will be my abode, Oh! Lord my life.

In the same pada in the Anupallavi section the Nayika says "Intalō nividakurākunte kanniru kāvēri kālūvasumi' | that is "if you (Nayaka) do not come here, my tears will flow like a stream of Kāvēri (river).

It is highly interesting to note that even the saint composer Sri Tyagarajasvami has used in his Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam, the exact idiomatic expression 'illuvakilayyēne' in the first Caranam of the song 'Andundakanē Vēga', in Pantuvarali raga, Triputa tala. It further states that my tears will flow like a stream and my gate will be my home.

Caranam:

Kana valenanu vela tekunte

**kannīru kālūvagā** barune

Inakuladhipa nivuranu

**Tāmasamaitē** nilluvakilayyene Oh! **Rāghava**

|| Andundakane vega ||

Hence these composers have lifted such beautiful phrases which are highly illustrative in communicating swiftly and easily the exquisite feelings, moods, encapsulated in the lines, thereby touching the emotional and aesthetic propensities to their highest potential.

In pada “Dārijūcu cunnadi nidu priya taralaksiyagu cinnadi” - in r̥ṅga Sankarābharanam, miśracāpu tala, the Nayika is Vasaka Sajjikā<sup>(1)</sup> and once again the sakhi describes to the Nayaka, in detail how the Nāyikā has dressed pleasingly and decorated the bed chamber to receive the Lord and looking with quivering eyes, she stands at the threshold of her house (talavakita) anxiously waiting to welcome Him-(Lord Rajagopala).

In another pada "Iddarilo nikevaru priyamo dani ēlu kommu sāmi" in Kambhoji raga, miśra capu tala, the sakhi is represented as a matchmaker who gives an account of the accomplishments of two young girls and provides him with an option to exercise his choice between the two.

In the Pada “Nāmēnu nimehu anucu palikina nimāta Nijamāyarā” in Yadukulakāmbhoji raga, adi tala. the Nayika is Sviyā—dhirā<sup>(2)</sup> and Nayaka is Pati—dhrsta<sup>(3)</sup> type. The Nāyikā is annoyed due to her husband's (Nayaka) affair with another lady. She indirectly accuses him of his unfaithfulness, disloyalty and deceiving nature. The Nayika using Nayaka's earlier utterances made during their amorous deeds, admonishes him with all irony and conveys her wounded love. She says "you once swore that we are one in body and mind but it **is only now I** realise

(1) A heroine dressed up for union and who in **cager** expeclalipn of Love's pleasure adorns herself joyfully and wails in the pleasurable bed chamber (- Nāṭyaśāstra XXII.218) Cf.Dr. Kanak Rele - Ed. - Hand Book of Indian Classical Dance Terminology: Nalanda Dance Research centre - Bombay - 1992. P.23.

(2) **Dhirā** is a woman offended in love and is **self-controlled** and rebukes her deceitful lover with sarcasm and indirect **speech**

(3) Pali is a hero who is **lawfully** wedded husband and **dhrsta** is one who is shameless and unfaithful to his beloved.

the real significance of the words most gracefully uttered by you as they have come true now - Oh! Kōmalāṅga Rājagopāla, the one endowed with enchanting beauty of form. She further says "look, you spent last night with that woman and as a result my eyes are **red** now, you derived immense pleasure in the company of that women, look I am overwhelmed with joy and happiness. That lady has left the marks of her nails on your broad chest, the pain was experienced by me. Today you are put to shame due to your acts (betraying my faith in you) and as a consequence I am filled with shame, Oh! Gopala, since we are one in body and soul. Thus the Nayika makes the Nayaka realise that she has been betrayed, deceived by his sweet words and reiterates the wretched love.

A perusal of the padas of Sabhapatayya, depicts the infinite shades and varieties of the **prime** sentiment **śṛṅgāra** in different types of heroines in all the eight sub-sentimental states or avasthas.

His padas provide immense scope for as many improvisations and elaborations of the poetic lines. Depending upon the dancers imaginative range of interpretation of the **text**, she can build upon the theme with interesting sancaris or episodic dramatisations that are contextually appropriate keeping in view the qualities and characteristic features of **the Nāyaka** and Nayika of the respective padas.

In all respects Muvvallūr Sabhapatayya is considered as the **Kṣetrayya** of the Maratha period. In addition to the padas, Sabhapatayya is accredited **with** the authorship of many Caritra **Nirūpaṇas**<sup>(1)</sup> and the songs from his Sita Kalyana Caritra Nirupana became popular numbers in the Harikatha kalaksepas.

(1) Cf.Dr.S.Scetha-**"Tanjore As Seat of Music"**-University of Madras. 1981, P.239.

It is learnt that Sabhapatayya had profound scholarship in the Bharata Sastra and was adept in the field of expressional dance. An interesting anecdote", proving Sabhapatayya's expertise as a dancer as **well** as his supreme devotion to his personal God is worthy of note -

Once Raja **Serfoji-II** is said to have made a proclamation, that the most meritorious and adept in the art of dancing would be duly honoured with all the royal insignia. Sabhapatayya, wanted to best utilise this opportunity so as to fulfill his heart's desire. In order to conceal his identity, he adorned the costume of a danseuse and he is said to have performed so gracefully as a danseuse, that every one in the court including the King, were spell bound by the danseuse's extraordinary histrionic abilities King Serfoji later coming to know that it was his worthy court musician who had impressed one and all by his captivating dance, at once rose to fulfill any wish expressed by Sabhapatayya. Being an ardent devotee of Lord Rājagopāla, the composer is said to have asked for the icon of Lord Kṛṣṇa worshipped by the King, (in his puja room) which according to him was the real wealth that would give him all the happiness and divine joy which the material riches fail to fulfill. It is learnt that Bharata Rasa-Prakaranam,<sup>(2)</sup> a work on the theory of aesthetics consisting of śloka in Sanskrit with its meaning in Telugu was compiled by Muvvallūr Sabhapatayya.

Some of his padas are as follows:-

- |                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| (1) Emātalādina        | Yadukulakambhoji |
| (2) Darijucu Cunnadi   | Sankarabharanam  |
| (3) Nāmēnu Nimēnu      | Yadukulakambhoji |
| (4) Yāla Vontigani     | Punnagavarali    |
| (5) Emandune Komma     | Sahana           |
| (6) Mancidinamunēde    | Anandabhairavi   |
| (7) Inivintadu puttaga | Begada           |

(1) Cf. Dr. S. Seetha - "Tanjore As Seal of Music" - University of Madras 1981 P239:

(2) Cf. P. Sāmbamūṛthy - "A Dictionary of South Indian Music and Musicians" - Vol.-I, The Indian Music Publishing House, Madras. 1952 - P.51.

(8) Itivanti Sudatini  
(9) Pati Sannidileni Satiki  
(10) Padakintiki povale

Bhairavi  
Sahāna  
Mohana

Very often, some of the padas of Ksetrayya and Sabhapatayya have created difficulty regarding its authorship. Owing to the similarity in the style and expression and the easy interchangeability of the two letter words of the signatures ‘Muvva & Rāja’ have added to the confusion. Incidentally there is a controversy regarding the authorship of the pada ‘Mancidinamunēḍe in Anandabhairavi raga. It is learnt that about fifty padas of Sabhapatayya were published in 1883, but unfortunately only a few padas are available today.

Among Sabhāpatayya’s prominent students who learnt the art of abhinaya from him were Pudukkottai Ammalu and Tiruvarur Kamalam. We learn that Kamalam was also the disciple of Sri Muttusvāmi Dikṣitar.

Kōttaivur Sivakkolundu Deṣikar:- He was a native of Kottaiyur village. Sivakkolundu's mastery of Tamil language and his scholarship in the art of music, dance and drama, made him notable and attracted the attention of King Serfoji-II who appointed him as his court poet. Most of his works are in praise of the presiding deities of different shrines in Tanjore. Among his three such works, Kotisvara Kovai. Tanjaiperuvudayarula and Kottaiyurula, the last mentioned work is lost to posterity.

In addition to his literary and artistic achievements Sivakkolundu was a past master in the field of Medicine and is said to have produced three works on medicine under the title “Sarabhendra Vaidya Muraigal”. His celebrated work “Sarabhendrabhūpāla Kuravanji”, a dance-drama in Tamil written as a panegyric on his patron King, proved him as a play wright par excellence. The music for this Kuravanji nataka was composed by

the illustrious Tanjore Quartette and was regularly enacted, in the Big temple during annual temple festivals, until the first half of the 20th century. Except his works on medicine and the Kuravanji nataka, his other compositions were pivoted round divine inspired themes.

Kuravañji Nataka:- It is an operatic ballet of Tamil country and belongs to one of the ninety six prabandhas of the Tamil literature. These Kuravanji natakas enshrine in its treasure trove, a happy consummation of the triple arts of music, dance and drama supplemented by interesting prose passages of both classic and colloquial dialect, all of which have gained tremendous class as well as mass appeal.

It is a known fact that temples from time immemorial were not only places of worship but were true centres of fine arts and learning, more so that music and dance were considered as part of niryarcana(daily worship) or one of the sixteen forms of worship called sodasopacaras. In addition to such ritualistic music & **dance**, dance-drama's also formed an indispensable part of the temple arts which were especially featured in the theatrical hall (Nataka sala) attached to the sacred precincts during temple annual festivals such as Brahmotsavas. These festivals were ostentatiously celebrated with all its pomp and glory which usually lasted for couple of days or more.

The Kuravanji natakas in general share a generic theme of heroine falling in love with the hero and her longing and languishing to unite with him. The hero may be a presiding deity of a temple or a ruling prince. The heroine's pangs of separation are mellowed after her acquaintance with the soothe sayer Kuratti, a gypsy girl, who is the principal character in the Kuravanji natakas. The term **Kuravañji** is a derivative of Kurava and Vanji. Kurava is the wandering gypsy tribe and Vanji means girl.

This gypsy girl is referred to as Kuratti\*, one of the important characters of the dance drama, who is also acclaimed as the fortune-teller belonging to Kurava (nomadic) caste. It is Kuratti who takes the narrative forward by reading the palm of the heroine, prognosticates her fortune and assures that her cherished desire to unite with her lover would soon be fulfilled.

The evolution of Kuravanji natakas can be traced to Kuratti pattu of **Sangam** period. Kuratti pattu (pattu in Tamil means songs) were known as songs rendered by Kuratti pertaining to simple episodes of palm reading and prognostication. This Kuratti pattu became an independent miniature treatise by itself around 9th century A.D. "Based on this Kuratti pattu, **Kuram**, a new type of poetic form, was evolved. This in turn provided the basis for the emergence of yet another type of lyrical poetry under the same name viz., Kuram, the verses of which contains the dialect of the Kuratti" <sup>(1)</sup>. In addition to Kuram, the story content of **Kuravañji** nataka also incorporates another type of nataka known as Kuluva natakam in which Kuluvan also called as Kuravan\*\* the spouse of Kuratti, figures as an important character, whose occupation is hunting. The theme of the nataka commences with the Kuravan hunting with his friend, he is suddenly reminded of Kuratti, whose absence stimulates in him feelings of love and unable to endure the pangs of separation, he gives the description of Kuratti to his friend who assures in identifying Kuratti. With the help of his friend, Kuravan goes in search of Kuratti and on finding her, he reprimands her for her absence from the house and poses several questions suspecting her chastity and Kuratti's convincing replies comfort Kuravan and they finally leave the place happily.

\* A counter part of Kuratti of Telugu region is known as Erukulasāni.

(1) Dr. V. **Premalatha** - Introduction - Sri Tyāgēśar Kuravañji; Published by T.M.S.S.M. Library, Thanjavur- 1970, P. 13.

\*\* Kuravan and Kuratti are also referred to as singan and Singi in the Kuravanji natakas.



"When the Kuluva natakam was appended to the Kuratti natakam, it took the enlarged form of the prabandha called Kuravañji"<sup>(1)</sup>. Hence, the Sarabhendra bhūpāla kuravañji nātaka comprises in its first section, the palm reading episode of Kuram and the theme of Kuluva natakam in its final section.

Kuravanji nataka strikes the chords of madhura bhakti when the presiding deity of a temple is depicted as the hero of the nataka. For example Tyagesar Kuravanji and Kumbhēśvara Kuravanji in which Lord Tyagesa of Tiruvarur and Kumbhēśvarar of Kumbakonam are the respective heroes of the natakas. In such cases the character of Kuratti, is understood as the symbolical representation of a guru, who leads the human soul in adopting the righteous path in its ultimate union with the eternal or the cosmic soul.

But the spirit of the subject is metamorphosed from its philosophical connotation, if the hero of the nātaka happens to be a King, or patron. The introduction of King as the hero was intended to please the governing forces and the nataka obviously would then become a panegyric expounding their greatness and glories.

The Rājārājesvara nataka. eulogising the King Rāja raja Chola-I (985-1014 A.D) for the construction of the monumental temple Br̥hadīśvaralaya', seems to be the precursor of such Kuravanji natakas with Kings as the heroes. The inscriptions in the Big temple<sup>(2)</sup> testify to the fact that this nataka was enacted during the reign of Rajendra Deva (1018-1070) in the Big temple on the occasion of the annual temple festival.

(1) Dr.V.Premalatha, Op.cit., P. 14.

(2) South Indian Inscriptions, Vol-II, Pt.3.

In Nayak period, we find reference to ‘Kuravañji’<sup>(1)</sup> to have been sung by the court dancers of King Raghunatha. In addition, Yaksagana became a popular art form which was considered as the legacy of the Nayak rulers.

Interestingly, the Maratha period witnessed the flourishing of both Kuravanji as well as Yakṣagānas in equal measure, which were performed both at the temple as well as at the court.

Some of the Kuravanji natakas produced during Maratha period are -

- (1) Saharaja Kuravanji by Muttu Kavirāyar
- (2) Rajamohana Kuravañji by Giriraja kavi
- (3) Sarabhendra bhupala Kuravanji by Sivakkolundu Desikar
- (4) Devendra Kuravañji by Raja Serfoji-II
- (5) Bethlehem Kuravanji by Vedanayakam Pillai
- (6) Tyāgeśar Kuravanji by unknown author.

Sarabhendrabhūpāla Kuravañji:- Amongst the Kuravañji’s “Sarabhendra-bhūpala Kuravanji” is said to have gained highest popularity for its musical excellence and lyrical beauty, and was enacted in the Big temple until the beginning of the 20th century. The platform where this nataka was staged in the Big temple is referred to as ‘Kuravañjimēḍai’<sup>(2)</sup>. This kuravanji was also known as Astakodi Kuravanji as it was enacted in the **Brhadīśvaralaya** on the 8th day of Citra(April) Tirivizhā and on the 9th day of Ashtakodi Tirivizhā or Brahmotsava celebrations.

To sing the praise of King Serfoji-II, this Kuravañji nataka was composed by his court poet Kōṭṭaiyur Sivakkolundu Desikar. Obviously, the hero

- (1) Dr. N. Veṅkatarāmanayya and M. Somaśekhara Sarma - Ed., - ‘Raghunāthābhivudavamu’ (yaksagana)- Published by T.M.S.S.M. Library, Thanjavur - 1951, P. 16;
- (2) Cf.N. John Ammaiyar - Sarabhendra bhūpāla kuravañji, Sīṭṭrillakkiyaccor Pozhivugal - 3rd conference, Kazhagam - Madras - 1967; P.276

of this dance drama is none other than King Serfoji and the name of the heroine of this Kuravanji nataka is **Madanavalli** whose beauty as described, seems to surpass even the celestial nymph Rati. The poet has given a biographical account of King Serfoji, regarding his birth, parentage, education and his literary and artistic accomplishments. He has eulogised his patron as person with ideal qualities, a true devotee of Lord Siva and regarding his charitable deeds exclaims Sivakkolundu, that even clouds feel ashamed to face Serfoji as they rain only in stipulated seasons, but the King is ever merciful towards his subjects and always showers on them with gold. Likewise, such similes, puranic references and significance of different shrines in and around Tanjore are abound in this Kuravanji nataka. The story of the Kuravanji is expressed through musical and Tamil literary forms such as Viruttam, Agaval, Asriyappa, Venba and Kocchaga Kallippa, interspersing with prose speeches or vacanas, both in refined as well as colloquial Tamil language. There are in total 71 songs set to rakti ragas with 20 sub divisions. The first eight consists of - benedictory verses (Kadavul vazhttu), invoking several Gods and Goddesses of Hindu pantheon such as Vignesvara, Candramoulisvara, Brahadisvara, Periyānāyaki, Kandavel, Vani etc., for the successful completion of the dance-drama. This is followed by **Maṅgalam** to Serfoji, which is found in the beginning as well as in the concluding section of the nataka. Mangalam comprises Pallavi and few Caranas set to Surati raga, adi tāla. The completion of Mangalam marks the entry of kattiakaran or the herald, on the stage, who gives a synopsis of the story of the Kuravanji and in general describes the scholarship and greatness of its author.

Subsequently, the character of Vignesvara's appearance on the stage leads to the commencement of the actual theme of the **Kuravañji**. In the

acts in which Kuratti and Kuravan figure, the language employed by the composer is colloquial Tamil and music, dance and the dramatisation invariably have popular folk elements incorporated in it. In the episodes featuring the heroine and her maids, one finds refinement and sophistication in the arts as well as in the language adopted. Thus the employment of such an elite and popular art with captivating jati patterns interspersed between that lyrical lines has imparted additional charm and beauty to this art form which has provided it with mass appeal and crowd pulling capacity.

Theme of Sarabhendra Bhupala Kuravañji:-

The art motif of this Kuravañji begins with King Serfoji coming out in procession through the streets of his capital with all pomp and glory accompanied by his relatives, courtiers and other paraphernalia. The heroine, Madanavalli during the course of playing with the balls,(pandattam) with her Sakhis, happens to witness the royal procession and on seeing Serfoji, falls in love with him. Overcome by extreme passion, she yearns to express her feelings of love to the King, and her languish is further intensified by the animate and inanimate objects such as moon, coolbreeze, Cuckoo, moonlit night, flowers, sea, fish, ship, swan etc. which are no more pleasurable things but aggravate the pangs of the heroine smitten with love.

She then requests her friend to go and convey her love-sick state to her lover and also explains to her the manner in which she should speak to King Serfoji on her behalf. The sakhi obliges the heroine's request and leaves for the hero's place in order to declare Madanavalli's love for the King.

As the sakhi does not return back, the heroine chides her for the delay and at this juncture the gypsy girl Kuratti appears at the threshold of her house, who musically narrates about the flora and fauna of her mountainous region and also of the places visited by her. Madanavalli invites the Kuratti and poses few questions to testify the prognostic skills and ability of the Kuratti. The Kuratti in support of her predictive achievements states that she is conversant in different regional languages such as Telugu, Marathi, Kannada, Hindi and English, indicative of her travels to these regions. She then gives the geographical description of the region of the hero, the greatness of the **Chola deśa** and exhibits the precious gifts such as gold, pearl necklace, shawl etc., presented to her by King Serfoji in appreciation of her abilities in fortune telling. Now Madanavalli being confident of Kuratti's prowess, requests her to read her palm upon which Kuratti by invoking the grace of Lord Brhadisvara predicts her fortune and assures that she would be successful in accomplishing her cherished desire and thus assuages Madanavalli's feelings of distress. Immensely pleased, Madanavalli presents Kuratti with costly gifts, overwhelmed with joy, Kuratti leaves the place happily.

Here, begins the theme of Kuluva natakam with Kuravan yearning to meet his wife; he describes the qualities of Kuratti to his friend who assures of his help to Kuravan in identifying her; they both go in search of Kuratti; on finding Kuratti, Kuravan reprimands her for the acquisition of such costly articles; Kuratti's reply pacifies Kuravan, leading to their reconciliation. With benediction to Lord Brhadisvara and **Māṅgalam** to Sarabhendra, the **Kuravañji** nataka comes to an end.

In one of the songs 'Collum vagai ellam(I will **tell** you **all**) of Sarabhendra Bhupala **Kuravañji**, the heroine explains to the sakhi, the manner in which the message is to be conveyed to Serfoji. The translation of the song set to **Tōḍi** raga, misracapu **tāla** is as follows:

Pallavi :

My friend, I shall tell you the manner and mode of speaking  
to the king on my behalf, my honey.....

Anupallavi :

Applauded and appreciated by noteworthy people of Tanjore,  
Raja Śarabhoji will be certainly pleased when you convey  
sweetly, my message

Caranam :

1. He rises up before the sun-rise , bathes and with holy ash smeared on his forehead and **rudrākṣa** beads adorning his neck, with love flowing from his heart, offers his morning and evening prayers worshipping Siva steadily in this way - with him at that place.....
2. When he is happy amidst erudite scholars reciting Vedas and Puranas, holding discussion *in extenso* for the questions raised, he offers gifts of pure gold to those wearing tulasi garland. a generous man indeed! at these times, you do not speak to him ....
3. **Maccam**, Konkanam, SriLanka (Ceylon), Kerala, **Salva**. Bengal, Turkey, Maharastra, Chinese Cochin when kings from these countries come and pay together their respects to him. at that point, do not speak to him.....
4. While he is in the council of wise ministers and commanders discussing their duties, you must not speak. When perfectly bosomed women are dancing and when learned poets are engaged in speeches in the conference, at these times, you must not go to him,....

5. When beautiful and large eyed women messengers there around, all standing in a line, looking at him with love in the procession surrounded by a big army of people, on the frontline, the king comes to his court.....
6. When the moon showers its light while the king passes by, when you stand at the threshold, If you bow and speak to him politely, success is yours, tell him my love-lorn state and the rest of the things I have told you, and return back with the garland in your hands, for my sake.....

A list of ragas utilised for the songs in Sarabhendrabhūpāla kuravani nataka is given below;

	<u>Rāga</u>	Tala	<u>Context/situation</u>
1.	Nāttai	Jhampa	Benedictory verses
2.	Surutti	Adi	Mangalam
3.	Paras	Adi	Herald's entry
4.	Madhyamavati	Adi	The character of Ganapathy's entry
5.	Ahiri	Misracapu	The heroine(Madanavalli) watching the procession.
6.	Sourastra	Misracapu	The heroine falling in love with Serfoji.
7.	Pantuvārālī	Tisram	Admonishing the animate
8.		Tisram	and inanimate objects for
9.		Tisram	aggravating the pangs of
10.		Adi	separation
11.	Sāveri	Adi	Sakhi's (friend) entry.
12.	Nadanamakriya	Adi	The heroine requests Sakhi to speak to Serfoji on her behalf.

13	Todi	Misracapu	The heroine explains to the Sakhi, the manner in which the message is to be conveyed to Serfoji
14.	Kalyāni	Adi	Madanavalli sends Sakhi to convey the message to Serfoji.
15.	Athana	Misracapu	Madanavalli laments as the Sakhi does not turn up.
16.	Begada	Adi	Kuratti's entry.
17.	Goulipantu	Misracapu	Kuratti meeting Madanavalli.
18.	Sahana	Ata	Madanavalli testifies the <b>skill</b> of Kuratti.
19	Sourāstra	Tisram	Kuratti describes about her region, the landscape mountains and also mentions the caste to which she belongs to and informs that her King is Serfoji.
20.	Bhairavi	Ādi	
21.	Anandabhairavi	Tisram	
22.	Asaveri	Adi	Kuratti gives the description of different region visited by her, its rivers, shrines and also the greatness of Coladeśa.
23.	Mōhana	Tisram	
24.	Sankarābharanam	Tisram	
25.	Kedaragoula	Adi	
26.	Suddha Saved	Adi	Kuratti tells Madanavalli how the women of different regions requested her to read their palms and prognosticate.

(The song in Suddha Saveri is in different languages such as Telugu, Marathi, Kannada, English and Hindi; and Kuratti proves her mastery over these languages and also gives a detailed account of the costly gifts received by her in these regions)



27.	Dhanyasi	Misracapu	Details regarding the presents received by Kuratti from King <b>Serfoji</b> .
28.	Paras	Tisram	At the request of Madanavalli, Kuratti prepares to read the palm of the heroine by completing all the formalities such as lighting the lamp, installing the idol of Lord Vignesvara etc. Kuratti predicts that Madanavalli's most cherished desire to unite with Serfoji, would soon be fulfilled.
29.	Saraṅgā		
30.	Bauli	Tisram	
31.	Yadukulakambhoji	Tisram	Kuratti's spouse Kuratti or Singan's entry.
32.	Madhyamavati	Tisram	Singan teaches his friend the technique of catching birds, the medical efficacy of some of the herbal plants. Singan is reminded of Kuratti, yearns to meet her and describes her qualities that she is adept in singing the ragas such as Punnagavarali, <b>Pantūvarāli</b> Bhairavi and <b>Tōḍi</b> . Singan seeks the help of his friend in identifying Kuratti.
33.	Purvikalyāṇi	Tisram	
34.	HamTrkalyani	Tisram	
35.	Kanada	Adi	Singan and his friend go in search of Kuratti. Singan meets Kuratti, their wordy duel and reconciliation.
36.	Nādanāmakriya	Tisram	
37.	Surutti	Tisram	
38.	Mukhari	Tisram	

**Maṇḍalāṁ-** They praise Lord **Brhdisvara** and **Serfoji-II** and leave the place in happiness. With this the Sarabhendra bhupala **Kuravaṇḍi** nataka comes to an end

**Pallavi Doraisvāmi Ayyar:** He was also called as **Madhyārjunam** Doraisvami Ayyar. He was a **pastmaster** in the art of Pallavi composition and was equally proficient in Telugu language. It is learnt that he defeated Bobbili **Keśavayya** in a musical combat by his intricate and fascinating rendering of the Pallavi **Chellunatarāvi modi** in Pantuvarali raga, capu **tāla**. He was a native of Tiruvaiyaru in Tanjore district and lived upto 34 years only. His maternal grandfather **Nayam Veṅkata** Subba Ayyar was a renowned vainika in the Tanjore court. Doraisvami Ayyar was a contemporary of Sri **Tyāgarāja** and his two sons, **Govindasivan** and **Sabhapati** received their training in music from Saint composer **Sri Tyāgarāja**, who was held in high esteem by **Doraisvāmi Ayyar**. He was an ardent devotee of Lord **Siva** and is said to have composed several **kr̥tis** and few **varnams** in praise of his personal God. His compositions written in chaste Telugu are earmarked for its poetical excellence. Though his compositions are all in praise of Lord **Siva**, he had signed his songs with the **mudra** '**Subramanya**'.

Endowed with remarkable musical talents, Doraisvami Ayyar enjoyed honourous position as a composer and performer in the court of **Rāja Serfoji-II**, with a monthly salary of 100 pons or gold coins (each pon was equivalent to 5/8th of a rupee).

It is learnt that he had composed 49 songs, and unfortunately only a few are available with the descendants of the composer. In addition to his musical achievements, he was accomplished in the art of painting and said to have painted 200 pictures out of which only 17 are with the descendants. Interestingly, his paintings depict the visual illustrations of the thematic content of his compositions. Beneath every painting, the painter-composer had given a vivid description of the theme concerning

the painting, in his own handwriting in Telugu, which looks like a print. In some of his paintings, one finds that the composer had depicted himself as suppliant standing at one end of the picture offering humble prayers to Lord Natarāja. His noteworthy kṛti 'Dūṛjattinatincina i pradosa samayamuna' in Gouri raga, Adi tala, describing the Cosmic dance of Lord Siva had been given a beautiful pictorial representation by the composer.

Doraisvami Ayyar had used mostly rakti ragas such as Bhairavi, Todi, Kedaragoula, Surutti, Mōhanam, Anandabhairavi and had also employed rare ragas like Dvijavanthi, Ganta and Ahiri.

It is learnt that the introductory lines of his kṛtis 'Durjattinatincina' in Gouri raga and 'Tatta dhimita' in Todi Raga, Adi tala which again deal with the description of the celestial dance of Lord Nataraja, were usually taken up for Pallavi singing in the music concerts. He had also composed a kṛti 'Elagudaya' in Śankarābharanam, cāputāla, in the style of Ninda stuti which is an expression of praise through rebuke. The kṛti 'Adenamma Harudu' in pharaz raga - Adi tala, which once again illustrates the dance of Siva, is a popular number in Bharatanatyam recitals. An anecdote relating to this composition is quite interesting and worthy of mention here.

It is stated that the vainika vidvans in the court of Raja Serfoji-II had aired their views claiming the superiority of vina to the human voice. Doraisvami Ayyar, in order to disprove this arrogant **statement**, composed and rendered the song 'Adenamma Harudu' in pharaz raga and the Vina players could not play the sound 'Ghir' repeatedly occurring in the song with required effect on their Vinas, but Doraisvami Ayyar, handled the

same with ease through vocal rendition. Thus he humbled the swollen headed musicians(Vina players) in the court. Out of the interesting compositions of Doraisvami Ayyar, the krti 'Parahamsa nālōna pavalimpave' in Ahiri raga, **Jhampa tāla**, is rich in interesting similes, abounds in philosophical connotations and is saturated with Nayika-Nayaka bhava. The form and content of this song is fashioned on the lines of a padam. The love and devotion of the author to Lord Siva is personified in the words of the Nayika appeasing and appealing to the Nayaka (Lord Siva) to accept her as she has surrendered her body and soul to Him. The transliteration and para-phrase of this composition are as follows:-

Pallavi: Parahamsa **nālōna** pavalimpave

Anupallavi: Paramapavana dayapara digambara

Cidambarapuramuna natinci **badalitivicāla** |

Caranam(1): Tanuvanesabhanu vistarambuganu

Nenarane capparamu **nirmincinānu**

Manamane bangaru **mañcambulōnu**

Ghanapancavannamou talagada **vēsīnānu** |

Caranam(2): Dhyamanu hemapatranttaramulonu

Anandamanedi **dugdannamiḍinanu**

Niriamamanedi teniyanu bosenu

**Pūni** bhujiyinci jojo **bāyalenu** |

Caranam(3): Telivinivanu **mānikya** dipambidonu

Velugu **Subramanyavinuta** ni kenu

Vela **lēnibhaktiyanu videmu** niccenu

Kalaya **na** buddhiyou kantaniccenu |

Pallavi:

Being an ascetic of the highest order (Supreme being beyond the manifested stage - Parabrahmā) lie within me .

Anupallavi:

Oh! the most Holy and Sacred, compassionate Lord Digambara, who is unclothed, by dancing at Cidambarapura (the holy place where the shrine of Lord Nataraja is situated) you must have been thoroughly exhausted, (hence lie within me Oh! Parahamsa)

Caranam(1):

With my body in the form of a spacious and extent court, I have constructed in it a canopied seat made out of my love and affection(for you). Making my heart like a bed, I have kept the holy Pañcākṣari Mantra (the five syllabled name of Lord Siva - Om Namah Śivāya) to serve as pillow for you. Hence Oh! Parahamsa lie within me.

Caranam(2):

With meditation personified as golden vessel, I have stored in it, happiness in the form of savoury made out of the mixture of milk and rice. I have poured honey into it which is akin to your name. Hence, Oh! Lord relish it and please stay in my heart as I cannot be away from you.

Caranam(3):

Here it is my intellect personified as jeweled light (Manikya dipam). Oh! the one praised by Lord Subrahmanya. I offer to you my devotion in the form of folded betel leaves (with arecanuts-tāmbūla). To unite with you, I present my mind and intellect as a maiden to you.

Though short lived, Doraisvami Ayyar's contribution to music and dance seems to be significant. It is learnt that his grand son **Sāmbasiva** Ayyar was an accomplished violinist and is said to have accompanied great musician Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar on the Violin.

Vedanāyakam Pillai(1774-1864):- He was one of the accomplished Christian poets in the court of Raja **Serfoji-II**. He was born into a rich saivaite family and was a native of Tirunelveli. It is learnt that his father Arunacalam Pillai got converted to Christianity and thereafter called himself as Daiva **Sahāyam**.

At the age of 12, Vedanayakam Pillai came over to Tanjore along with his tutor Rev Schwartz, noted Christian missionary, who promised him with a better future and it was at Tanjore that Vedanayakam and Serfoji became fellow students of Rev. Schwartz.

Vedanayakam Pillai is said to have enjoyed privileged position among the court poets of Raja Serfoji and received 10 varahas towards his monthly salary apart from other royal favours.

Immensely pleased with his musical rendition of the history of Maratha dynasty, the King presented his poet friend with a beautiful shawl and 100 varahas for reading out the famous treatise in Tamil 'Novavin **Kappal**' - 'Noah's ark'. He was the author of **Bethelehem Kuravañji** the theme of which centres round the **life** of Lord Jesus Christ. Acknowledging his abilities as a **fine** composer, Serfoji is said to have requested Vedanayakam to compose another Kuravanji eulogising Lord Brhadisvara of Big temple, but the poet is stated to have refused to author any work in praise of Hindu Gods and unceremoniously turned down the request of his patron.

It is further inferred from the records of the Tanjore Court <sup>(1)</sup>, that **Vedanāyakam** incurred royal displeasure on account of his derogatory remarks about Hindu & Islam religions which antagonised the King and ultimately led to their strained relations.

Nevertheless Vedanayakam pillai, had good number of works to his credit. Vedanayakam Pillai composed a poetic work called Aranatindam based on the 3000 year old romantic epic written by Israili King Solomon. The work expounds the Madhura bhakti cult, symbolising Jesus Christ as the Nayaka. Several songs composed by him with the stock theme of Nayika-NSyaka **bhāva**, resemble the padas in its structural frame work. A similar pada from his work Aranatindam depicting the Vipralambha **Srīngāra**, set to raga Saveri - adi **tāla** is as follows :-

Pallavi:- **Arumai** raksakar Varuvaro

Enakku ananta **sukham** taruvaro | Arumai |  
(Oh! the dear Saviour, would He come and give me  
the eternal bliss)

Anupallavi:- Tiruvulame **peru valame**

dinatudiye yenai **madiye** | Arumai |  
(Your heart itself is a great support, I worship you  
daily with whole heartedness)

Caranam:- Muttamitta ennai **anaitātra**

Enn **muzhu** hrdayattiyum terra  
**Nittam** avar padattai potra  
Enn nenjin kavalayellam **matra**  
Ninaiv odingi **manam** odingi  
Ninai **unarnduyanai manandu** | Arumai |

(1) Letter written by Vedanāyakam, dated 1-3-1828 10 King Cf.Pulavar **Irāsu** - **Sarabhoijum**. **Vedanāyaka Sāstrivarnam**, Mannar **Scerfoji** - **Ayvukovai** - Vol-II; - Tamil University, Thanjavur- P.187

(Caress me with Your embrace so as to console my heart.

Daily by praising Your sacred feet, my worries get redressed.

By realising You, I have forgotten myself, hence accept me.)

Another pada from his poetic work Raksaniya manoharam-"Anma pralābham" refers to the Nāyikā's anguish, at the Lord's indifference towards her. She states that "in spite of His (Lord's) miserable condition, with sacred feet shedding blood and shouldering the cross, the Lord approached me with lot of love and affection, but today even after my calling him aloud with earnest appeal, he does not turn up, what mistake have I committed". Similarly, he had written many Kirtanas with religious fervour. In some of his works Vedanāyakam had addressed himself as Kavicakravarti, Kaviraya annaviyar, Tamil Vadyar and Upadēṣiyar etc. He is stated to have composed a very touching elegy on the demise of King Serfoji-II. Vedanayakam Pillai is said to have lived upto 32 years after the death of his patron King.

Muttusvami Diksitar: He was youngest of the Trinity of South Indian Music and was born in to the family of reputed musicians and vaggēyakāras like Govinda Diksitar (minister in the court of Nayak rulers)and Veṅkatamakhi (author of the celebrated work - caturdandi prakāśikā) whose contribution to Karnatic music had paved way for the development of both the Laksana and Lakshya of the art. Muttusvami DTKsitar was a native of Tiruvarur, his father Rāmasvāmi Diksitar a scholar in Telugu and Sanskrit, was a prolific composer of varnas, rāgamālikas. He was a vainika in the court of King Tulaja-II and King Amarasimha and is said to have composed 108 raga tālamālikas. Muttusvami Diksitar had his initial training in music from his father, who later put him under the tutelage of Cidambaranāthayōgi from whom



Muttusvami Diksitar is said to have received the Sri Vidya upadesa. Tradition has it that Muttusvami Diksitar had the divine vision of Lord **Subrahmanya** at Tiruttani and as a corollary to it, we find all his compositions signed with the **mudra** 'Guruguha', an alter name of Lord **Subrahmanya**. He was not only a profound scholar in Sanskrit but had acquired good mastery over Tamil and Telugu languages too. Though most of his krtis are in Sanskrit, we also find few **maṇipravāla** compositions written in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu languages.

His prolific output of krtis in praise of different deities of Hindu pantheon, are abound in literary embellishments and rhetorical beauties. The employment of Notusvara or western melodies to the songs authored in native - Sanskrit language by Diksitar bears ample testimony to his egalitarian outlook. Muttusvami Diksitar was patronised by Raja Serfoji-II and in one of his **krtis** 'Nabhomani cadragi **nayanam**' in Nabhomani raga, Triputa tala, he had eulogised his patron as the ardent devotee of Lord Brhadisvara.

The Anupallavi of the krti in part is as follows:-

**Śuddha** spatika **saṅkāsam**

Sarabhendra samseviṭa caranam

Rajasekharam **bhayaharaṇam**

In addition to this he had also written few slokas in praise of his patron outof which **aśloka** has been listed in the appendix.

It is stated that Muttusvami Diksitar at the request of his disciples, the Tanjore Quartette, composed a caukavarna 'Rupamujuci' in T3di raga, adi tala; yet there is some controversy regarding the authorship of this composition. This varna which is in praise of Lord Tyagesa of **Tiruvārūr**,

has *sāhitya* only for Pallavi, Anupallavi and carana. Subbarāma Diksitar a worthy descendant of Mutrusvami Diksitar had encapsulated 219 compositions of Muttusvami Diksitar in his reputed work '*Saṅgita Sampradāya pradarsini*'. Indeed the immortal compositions of Diksitar have breathed new life to Karnatic music and his unique service to the art seems to have overshadowed the contribution of his predecessors to the South Indian Music.

Pallavi Gopālayya:- Amongst the galaxy of outstanding performers-cum-composers of King Serfoji's court, Pallavi Gopalayya occupies a honoured place. He was a Dravida Brahmin and native of Thanjavur <sup>(1)</sup>. He had good scholarship in Telugu and was well versed in the science of music. He was considered as an expert vocalist and vainika of the period. The extraordinary proficiency in the art of Pallavi singing was his forte and hence the title 'Pallavi' got prefixed to his name.

He was a sagacious composer of many Ata tala *tāna varnas* in rakti ragas such as Kambhoji, Kalyani and Todi. His *varnas* are remarkable pieces of high craftsmanship and serve as examples of Lakṣya and Lakṣana Sangita. The *tana varna* 'Vanajaksi' is invested with beautiful Kalpanasvaras of rare originality and facilitates the rendition with attractive gamakas. Both the *tana varnas* 'Vanajaksi' in Kalyani raga and '*Kanakāṅgi*' in raga Todi are dedicated to his patron King Serfoji-II. Apart from *tana varnas*, Gopalayya is credited with many Kirtana compositions most of which are set to rakti *rāgas*.<sup>(2)</sup> He had signed his compositions with 'Venkata' *mudra*.

(1) Sri Subbarama Dikshitar - "*Saṅgita Sampradāya Pradarsini*" - printed at Vidyā Vilāsiṇi Press, Ettayāpuram, 1904, Vol.I -P.26.

(2) Ibid

Anai-Ayya brothers:- The two brothers Anaiayya and Aiyayya, popularly known as Anai-Ayya were gifted composers who adorned the court of King Serfoji-II. The brothers were the natives of Vaiyyaceri, a village situated about 6 to 7 miles to the west of Tanjore. They were scholars in Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil. Being ardent devotees of mother Goddess (Devī upasakas) they composed several krtis in Tamil and Telugu languages with the signature 'umādāsa' which were popularly referred to as umādasakrtis. In addition, there are several songs in praise of the presiding deities of different temples in and around Tanjore such as Agastisvara and goddess Mangalambika of Vaiyyaceri, Pranatartihara and Dharmasamvardhini of Tiruvayyar. The Krti 'Eppadiyil' in raga Mukhari is in praise of Lord Kanaka-Sabhēsan of Cidambaram. Among the Siblings, the elder brother Anaiayya is said to have been a very good lyricist, and the Sahityas emanated from his brains were set to apt music using raktiragas by his younger brother Aiyayya. Their compositions surcharged with devotional fervour, was noted for its simple literary style and high musical value, and often figured as popular numbers in the concert programmes only. Yet. Late Smt. Bālasarasvati, the doyen of abhinaya. is said to have performed the umadasa krti 'Ettanaittān Viddai' in Anandabhairavi in one of the music Academy recitals. Anai-Ayyā brothers had many disciples and notable among them were Vaiyyaceri Pancanada Ayyar, the father of the great musician Mahā Vaidyanātha Ayyar and Thanjavur Kāmāksi ammāl, the grand mother of Vina Dhanammal.

In addition to their ingenuity as composers, Anai-Ayya brothers were fine singers and it is learnt from an anecdote that Sri Tyagarajasvami is said to have gone into raptures after listening to their soulful rendering of Varali raga and its excellent exposition, and stated to have showered

encomiums on the brothers and exclaimed that ‘Varāli’ is yours and only yours and it is my privilege to enjoy listening to it”<sup>(1)</sup>

"According to an oral tradition, the music and sweet voice of the Anai-Ayya brothers attracted venomous cobras to attend their concerts. The deadly reptiles could not be scared away by the panicky human rasikas nor would they harm them in any way. They would quietly slip away after the Mahgalam. This is a fitting testimony to the greatness of their music and the treasure of their voice (Sareera Sampat)<sup>(2)</sup>. Some of the compositions of Anai-Ayya in Telugu are as follows:-

<u>I. Telugu compositions</u>	<u>Raga</u>	<u>Tāla</u>
1. Ambanannu	Todi	Rupakam
2. Parākela	Riti gouḷa	Rupakam
3. Intaparākā	Nadanamakriya	Rupakam
4. Bhajana Seyave	Kedāram	Rupakam
5. Mahimateliya <b>tarama</b>	Sankarabharanam	Rupakam
6. Saranu Saranu	Cenjuriti	Rupakam

Todi Sitarāmayya:- The appellation 'Tōdi', is indicative of his eminence in the exposition and innovative elaboration of Tōdi raga in all its lustrous beauty and sparkling features. His delineation of this raga was an aural feast to his patron King Serfoji-II.

An anecdote relating to it is that Sitarāmayya due to financial constraints had to pledge his inimitable Todi raga. but was unable to redeem it, for want of money and hence could not render it in the court. But when the generous patron Serfoji-II came to know that the raga was mortgaged, he at once cleared the debt along with the interest amount and secured

(1) Cf.T. Visvanāthan and T. Sankaran - Compilation of compositions of Anai-Ayyā Brothers - Published by **Bṛhaddvāni**, Madras, 1990 - P.9.

(2) **Ibid**, P.M

the raga for his illustrious musician. As Serfoji-II and the members in the court were very much longing to hear the delineation of Todi raga, Sitaramayya heeding to their wish delighted them with his captivating exposition of the raga virtually transporting every one in the court to a state of musical trance. From Saṅgīta Sampradaya Pradarsini we learn that Sitaramayya had authored few compositions<sup>(1)</sup>.

Sankarabharanam Narasavva:- He was another eminent musician in the court of Serfoji-II who deservedly got the name of the raga Sankarabharanam as title, on account of his unparalleled skill and expertise in handling the raga. He is said to have written few Tamil padas<sup>(1)</sup> which are unfortunately not available.

The period of Rāja Serfoji-II was surely a glorious era of artistic exuberance. Good amount of compositions for Sadir katcheri, gallored during Serfoji's period, written from the pen of court composers are still having an appeal and many are even being culled out not only in the present Bharatanatyam recitals but in other dance styles too.

After such a glorious era, the art of Sadir during the period of Sivāji-II which was the last phase of royal patronage to art at Tanjore, on the whole was on a low profile. Though evidences to the performances of music, dance-dramas and western dance of the period are available, the unstable political situation at Tanjore did not pave way for the encouragement of the art.

(1) Sri Subbarāma Diksitar - Sangita Sampradāya Pradarsini' Vol.1 -P.35

(2) Ibid

## CHAPTER V

### The last phase of royal patronage to Sadir at Tanjore

Sivaji-II, the only son of King **Serfoji-II**, was the last Maratha ruler of Thanjavur who ruled from 1832 to 1855 A.D. In the words of Bishop **Heber\***, 'Sivaji' was a pale and sickly lad and was not noted for his physical or mental **attainments**<sup>(1)</sup>. As ill-luck would have it, Sivaji-II died in the year 1855 leaving behind not a single male issue inspite of his repeated marriages numbering to twenty of which his marriage with 17 brides(from Kolhapur, **Satārā**, Konkan etc.), on the same day and at the same time is quite baffling to note. Historians are forced to believe that all the attempts made by Sivaji to beget a son, turning in vain and in the absence of an heir-apparent, the ruler did not work with prudence in going for adoption and even the earlier experiences of the adoption of his father by King Tulaja-II and the annexation of Nagpur and other principalities in India lapsing to the East India Company in the absence of an heir, seem to have had no impact on him and at the cost of his obsession to have a child of his own, the kingdom of Tanjore was subjected to the doctrine of lapse and declared by the British as vacant jurisdiction in 1855 A.D.

As a consequence even the titular dignity of the Tanjore Raj was lost to the extent that the private property of the royal family was seized by the East India Company. But such a decision was lateron altered by the British who released a total pension of Rs.45,535 as dues for nearly 5000 members of the ex-royal family.

\* One of the British **admirers** of **Serfoji-II** who **visited** Tanjore court during 1826

(1) Cf.A. **Pañchanathan** - '**Guide** Book to **Sarasvati Mahal**' - T.S.M. Series **No.201**; T.M.S.S.M. Library, Thanjavur - 1993, **P.46**.

Indeed, it is quite convincing that such an atmosphere of political instability could not have given the art, its old privileges, and a high profile, on the other hand circumscribed its growth. The illustrious Tanjore Quartette also did not seem to have enjoyed a privileged position towards the end of the Tanjore Raj. A worthy indicator to this point is the letter addressed to King Sivaji-II by Sivanandam, one of the Tanjore Quartette. The letter written in modi script dated 10th October 1844,<sup>(1)</sup> states that Sivanandam was issued orders by King Sivaji-II that all the four brothers (Tanjore Quartette) should teach the Hindustani dance and Karnataka natya to all the devadasis dwelling in Tanjore. Abiding by the orders of the Sarcar, all the four brothers were said to have trained these devadasis, day and night despite their personal sufferings and without caring for food and drinks. But the Devastāna madhyasthas or mediators had issued orders denying royal audience to these brothers who were also forbidden to present the dance performance in the royal presence. The letter further states that, Sivanandam since two years had been appealing to madhyasthas to seek the royal permission to revoke the orders, but the madhyasthas were said to have remained indifferent to his request. As a result Sivanandam made a request to King Sivaji-II to be merciful enough to sanction orders to resume their tradition of conducting the dance performance at the court as before. Nevertheless, there are references in the modi manuscripts to certain kuravanji natakas to have been written during Sivaji-II's reign. The authorship of Marathi drama 'Natēśavilāsa Nataka' has been ascribed to King Sivaji-II.

(1) Modi Manuscript -12 - 262 (No.2859) Cf. K.M. Venkatarāmāyā - Administration and social life under the Maratha Rulers of Thanjavur: published by Tamil University, Tanjore. 1984, PP.237, 540 & 541, this letter in the modi script has been given in Appendix..

It is learnt from the contemporary records of the period, that **Lāvani**, a folk musical form of Maharashtra was highly encouraged by Sivaji-II who had patronised many lavani composers, prominent among them was Lavani Venkata Rao, who is said to have composed many lavanis eulogising his patron. It is further inferred from the records that Western and Hindustani dances gained popularity and encouragement at the hands of King Sivaji who seems to have had a leaning to these dances. With the demise of Raja Sivaji-II, the Tanjore Raj under the rule of Marathas came to an end and the decline of royal patronage to art, had a devastating effect on the art and its practitioners. The wages for the devadasis recruited to the temples maintained by the royalty, was stopped; for instance, four daughters of dasi **Varalaksmi** attached to the Cidambaresvara temple in the Sarabhendra raja **pattnam**, were said to have received emoluments of 5 **panams** and 2 **kalams** of paddy each but after Sivaji-II's death, it is learnt that they were only given meagre **pension**<sup>(1)</sup>.

From time immemorial, the institution of devadasi was prevalent all over India as early as the 3rd century B.C., in places where the temples were in abundance. The devadasis also referred to as **ganikā** as they were considered as the most learned women and adept in the art of music and **dance**, became an indispensable part of these magnificent structures, so assiduously built by the ruling **monarchs**.

Apart from their economic status, they were said to have enjoyed high social status and were respected as the ever auspicious women (**Nityasumaṅgalis**) who possessed the power to ward off evil effects.

(1) Modi **manuscripts** - S.M.M.T. - 7 - 690 - 696 - T.M.S.S.M. Library.



The decline of royal patronage and colonial rule in Tanjore in the later half of 19th century, turned the entire situation topsy-turvy. Most of the temples were virtually impoverished and its inhabitants especially devadasis were deprived of their privileges and as recourse they looked towards the patricians and alien rulers for their livelihood and sustenance of their art. The norms and stipulations abiding dancers, which were strictly enforced both at the temple and court were no longer prevalent, resulting in lack of discipline and tardy deterioration in the standards of the art of some of the devadasis. We are given to the understanding that certain sections of the devadasi community, by force of circumstances, started leading immoral lives and this resulted in an inglorious effect on the art practised by them which gradually lost its prestige and dignity. With the passage of time, many social reformers, realising the seriousness of the consequences of such immoral practices that crept in some groups of the devadasis, condemned the notorious custom of dedicating young women to the temples which according to them was the crux of the problem and served as license to promiscuity. Since the artistic accomplishments such as music and dance were best utilised by some of the devadasis with an ulterior motive to promote the evil trade, the social reformers under the leadership of Dr. Mrs. Muthulaksmi Reddi, a doctor by profession, who herself belonged to devadasi community, stood on their heels to abolish the devadasi system and discourage the art so as to champion the cause of women belonging to devadasi families.

In order to redress and cicatrise their lives, the leader passed a resolution in the Madras legislative council to abrogate and abolish the heinous system and discourage the art termed as '**nautch**' associated with them. This was the sole aim of the Anti-Nautch Movement, which was launched

way back in the later half of the 19th century by the social benefactors as a means to put an end to the ill-effects of the devadasi system and the art practised by them\*. But the movement is said to have gained impetus only in the first half of the 20th century, with good number of social reformers belonging to elite sections of the society extending their support to the anti-nautch movement spearheaded by Dr. Muthulaksmi Reddi, who cropped up the issue in the press, criticising the cultivation of the art of dancing and discouraging the dance performances by the devadasis. As a result of this movement several great dance masters (nattuvanars) most of them quite old and their worthy acclaimed disciples (devadasis), who were true to the divine art of Sadir, started leading **neglected**, suppressed and impoverished lives in remote villages which were once considered as renowned seats of art.

Many votaries of art expected a disastrous effect of the anti-nautch movement on the art of Sadir - the priceless heritage of Indian culture, so precautiously preserved, developed and garrisoned by the artists and the Kings of Tanjore. They further anticipated that the art may be endangered to the extent of its extinction. Sensing this threat, they felt it was high time to save the valuable art, from its perilous and hazardous state. The votaries firmly resolved to "spare the bad elements and save the art" from falling into desuetude. It was at this troubled times that E. Kṛṣṇa Ayyar, an advocate by profession, secretary to the newly emerged Music Academy, Madras and equally accomplished in the art of music and dance, appeared on the dance scenario - as the saviour

\* Owing to the stigma attached to the art and **better** awareness created by the anti-nautch movement, some of the educated **discendants** of the temple dancers like Smt. **Tilakam Prof.** of Music (**Reid.**), Tanjore (grand daughter of Late Smt. **Kamalam**, the renowned temple dancer in the shrine of Lord **Tyāgarta** of Tiruvānūr) strongly revolted and refused to get dedicated to the temple - Information elicited from **Interview** with Smt. Tilakam on 27-4-94 at Thanjavur.

of Sadir to preserve, protect and promote the cherished art. Though E.Krsna Ayyar opposed the degeneration of the art as a result of immoralities of life creeping into its divine nature, yet he was surely antagonistic to the ideas of anti-nautch leaders to annihilate the art just because certain stock of devadasis were leading promiscuous lives.

In this noble endeavour of the resuscitation of the art, the yeoman services of the Music Academy, Madras and its band of dedicated members, can be marked with golden letters in the annals of the history of Sadir. The role of the Music Academy, Madras, in saving, reviving, refurbishing and restoring the art of Sadir from falling into oblivion and abeyance is notable and significant. The proceedings of its conferences were fruitful as it succeeded in clearing the nebulosity that beclouded the art. Among its conferences, the sixth annual conference held in the month of December 1932, proved to be quite eventful and epoch making, as the art of Sadir was **rechristened** "Bharatanatyam". The renaming of Sadir as Bharatanatyam was mainly intended to dispel and eliminate the acrimonious afflictions that got attached to the term Sadir and the new name would re-equip the art with its pristine glory, which it was enjoying since innumerable centuries. According to E. Krsna Ayyar 'Pandits had always called Sadir **attam** as Bharatam and the fact that the art was found to conform closely to the principles and technique stated in Bharata's Natya Sastra encouraged those who worked hard for its renaissance to popularise it, justifiably, under the generic name of Bharatanatyam'<sup>(1)</sup>.

The Music Academy, Madras, with an avowed purpose to establish and convince the educated public, regarding the richness of the art, encouraged the public performances of devadasis by arranging the venue, for

(1) **Sruti** - Indian classical music and **dance magazine**, Madras, issue No.27/28 - December 1986/ January 1987-P.31

staging the dance performances within its precincts even during the period when the anti-nautch movement virtually engulfed and obfuscated the entire artistic world.

The first of its performances, was by the great natyacarya, Sri Meenaksisundaram pillai's disciples - **Rājalakṣmi** and **Jivaratnam** popularly known as **Kalyāṇi** daughters of Tanjore. In the ensuing years many noted dancers, participated, among whom Mylapore Gouri **Ammāl**, Balasarasvati, PandanallurSabharanjitam and Kalanidhi (Ganapathy) **Nārāyaṇan** are only to mention a few.

As a result, E. Krsna Ayyar, along with his esteemed co-members of the academy, spurred of the renaissance movement which worked in defensive to counter the effects of the anti-nautch movement and in the proceedings of the sixth annual conference of the Music Academy, Madras, he also passed few resolutions regarding the encouragement of the art of **Bharatanatyam** and also to create an awareness among the public that anti-nautch movement over the years could only damage the art with no improvement in reforming the lives of the **devadāsīs** which was the main objective with which the movement was launched. He enthused people to appreciate the art, which had nothing innately bad in it and hence sought the public support for the art. It is learnt that E. Krsna Ayyar's interest in the art drove him to personally learn the art of dancing from the eminent guru Sri Natesa Ayyar. As a part of his campaigning struggle for the revival of the art of Bharatanatyam, Krsna Ayyar adorned in female attire, gave benefit dance performances and also presented lecture demonstrations, which were well received by the public and thus elevated the art-consciousness and genuine interest among them. A perusal of the proceedings of the Music Academy

conference held on 28th December 1932 and the resolutions moved at the conference with regard to the encouragement of the art of Bharatanatyam are worthy of note and hence mentioned below:-

The chairman of the conference Sri Tiger Varadachariar, in opening the proceedings for the day, read the letter addressed to him by Mr. G.A. Johnson, the Assistant Editor of the 'Madras Mail', who had been invited to attend the conference. The letter expressed his inability to attend the proceedings of the conference. The relevant portions of the letter that are significant to the encouragement of the art are quoted below:-

"There is a point which has occurred to me in connection with these discussions which I submit might usefully be raised. This refers to the public performances of the nautch, which I understand many reformers wish to discourage. It is reasonable to suppose:-

- (1) That if it is intended to reform the Devadasis they must be given an alternative profession. Public performances of the dance should provide them with a lucrative opportunity to display their talents.
- (2) If the dance is to be freed from its less respectable, associations, the encouragement of public-displays appears to be the best way to do it. Private parties tend to encourage the notion of lack of respectability. Public, on the other hand, show the dance for what it is. Lack of respectability might best be removed by attendance at these public functions of respectable people<sup>(1)</sup>."

(1) The Journal of the Music Academy, Madras -Vol.IV, 1932- P. 113.

The chairman then put forth the notice of the resolutions received by him from E. Krsna Ayyar on the subject of the encouragement of the art of **Bharatanatyam**, that were to be moved at the conference that day. The resolutions **stated**<sup>(1)</sup> that:-

1. "This conference is of opinion, that Bharatanatyam, as a great and ancient art, is unexceptionable and worthy of public support.
2. This conference views with concern the rapid decline of Bharatanatyam and appeals to the public and art associations to give it the necessary encouragement.
3. This conference requests the Music Academy, Madras to take steps to disseminate correct ideas regarding the art and to **help** the public to a proper appreciation thereof.
4. This conference is of opinion that in as much as women are the appropriate exponents of the art, it is desirable that to start with, women's organisations do take immediate steps to give proper training in the art by instituting a course of instruction for the same.
5. This conference is of opinion that, in order to make dancing respectable it is necessary to encourage public performances thereof before respectable gatherings".

At the request of the chairman, scholars, exponents in field of music and other notable persons who participated in the conference expressed their views on the subject of the resolutions.

The excerpts of the views aired by some of **them**<sup>(2)</sup> are as follows:-

1. "Gayaka **Sikhāmani** Muthiah Bhagavatar spoke in Tamil to the following effect:-

(1) **The Journal of the Music Academy, Madras -Vol.IV 1932- P. 113.**

(2) **Ibid, Pp.113 - 123**

We all know by experience that the primary basis on which music itself rests is 'bhavam'; and that art of dancing is undoubtedly the best and most natural exponent of that bhavam which is the fundamental element of music.....No raga will be complete without bhavam and the only art that brings out this bhavam to perfection is dancing.....It has been said that in the practice of the art, certain objectionable features creep in. I would meet that criticism by saying that simply because a particular individual develops a particular defect or does not impress the audience in any particular respect, it is not proper to condemn the art itself. I am strongly of opinion that not only females but males should practice the art, if they want to attain perfection in music itself.....I am sure it will not be a very difficult affair for males to practice this art of dancing side by side with the greater art of music."

2. Mr. C.R. Srinivasa Ayyangar said " The art of music may be divided into three main branches, **gitam**, **vadyam** and **nrttyam**. Music will not be complete without a combination of these three factors.....It is a great pity that by force of circumstances, the art of dancing has come to occupy a low level at present. Everybody knows that there are two ways of relieving a patient - either by giving him medicine or by killing him outright. If the art of dancing is to be killed, we need not assemble here at all. Moreover it is an art which cannot be killed, being naturally present in every thing we do. So the only course now open to us is to mend it and bring it to a level which it ought legitimately occupy. A high level of efficiency in this art of Abhinayam can be reached only

if we teach it to our children while they are young. .... what I want to emphasise in connection with this resolution is that if you find anything distasteful in this art, you can eschew it. .... but this science of **bhavam** has existed in this country for ages, and it is up to us to improve it and bring it to a high level".

3. Mr. V. Varaha **Narasimhāchārlu** said "until a very few years ago, this art was practised by females in temples as an expression of bhakti; but it gradually degenerated. That is however no reason why the art itself should be condemned. If there is any defect in the morals of these persons, steps should be taken to remedy that defect; but to destroy the art itself on that ground is neither an effective remedy nor a wise step. Even in that profession, there are people who are leading good lives. It is a pity that these are gradually giving up the profession as it is not paying nowadays".
4. Dr. S. **Krisnasvāmi** Ayyangar expressed that "whether the art is worth preserving is perhaps of the essence of the question; but why should that question arise with respect to one art alone which is so much appreciated as a necessary branch of the art of music. .... the arts of music and **natyam** are connected with each other and go together. If you destroy one, you may perchance, without meaning it, destroy the other as well. The greater the degree of cultivation of the fine arts by society, the greater is measure of its culture. .... It is freely said that the practitioners or some of them at any rate are leading lives which fall very much below what a moral life ought to be. .... the art might go as well as the immorality with it. It is just



like saying that because I am in the habit of getting frequent colds, I must cut off my head.....Dancing, like so many other arts, comes as a rare accomplishment and...if practised as a profession, I am quite sure it will give just sufficient amount for living a decent life; but if you want to carry this art to perfection, to the highest degree possible as regards technique, etc., then you do require a certain number of people who can devote themselves entirely to this art. In such a case, naturally, such people will come from all kinds and conditions of life, because you cannot know where genius exists, whatever be the character of such people for the **nonce**, you must encourage it and see that the art is made an honourable one. I do not believe that those people themselves would wish that they should lead a bad life".

5. Diwan Bahadur N. **Paṭṭābhirāmā** Rao Pantulu said "To take a common illustration, it is an admitted fact that ghee is a necessary article of diet for our nutrition. Simply because it gets spoiled by being stored in a brass or copper vessel, we do not think of giving up the use of ghee altogether, but we try to secure its purity by taking care to see that it is stored in a better vessel". Hence he opined that "we should not neglect this treasure of art that has been coming down to us since hallowed memory. It is our duty to make every effort possible to revive it in all its glory".
6. Mr. C.N. **Muṭṭuranga** Mudaliar, said "In my younger days I remember there was an anti-nautch party formed. The object with which it was formed was, that prostitution, which generally prevailed among the class which practised the art,

should be eradicated. But I am afraid the result has been, that nautch has undoubtedly gone to a great extent, but that prostitution still persists. This clearly shows that prostitution has nothing to do at all with the practice of dancing, as an art. Bharata **Natyam** has existed in this country from very ancient times.....I therefore consider that it is our primary duty to revive this ancient art and improve it in all possible ways, eschewing vice wherever it exists".

7. Mr. P.G. **Sundareṣa Śāstriār** stated "One speaker before me said that ghee would be spoiled if kept in a brass or copper vessel. True but there is a remedy for it; that is; you can give a lead coating to that vessel. Similarly, if we teach self-respect to the people who are already practicing this art, there can be no fear of an immorality creeping in,.....so also it is most unfair that just because somebody wrote something in the papers about dancing, we should let the art die once for all.....It is therefore upto this conference, gentlemen, to see that this art of dancing thrives more and more and is taught in our schools and colleges".

Mr.E.Kṛṣṇa Ayyar, then read the following message from Mahamahopadhyaya S. Kuppusvami Sastriar, Professor of Sanskrit, the Presidency College, Madras :-

"I am glad, and it is but proper that the appeal for the encouragement of **Bharatanatyam** should go forth with the imprimatur of the Music Academy.....Bharatanatyam is an art that has been handled by great men and women in the past. If it has fallen accidentally into evil hands, it is no fault of

the art.....The immediate task of art lovers should be to encourage the **fine** arts particularly among the reclaimed members of the Devadasi class, especially as their heredity in the art will be valuable.....The Devadasis might be induced to have regular married life and make an honourable living by the art. As for the question of family ladies taking to the art, it is enough if, for the present, they are induced to cultivate a sympathetic and appreciative attitude towards it. Time will work out the rest".

Likewise many eminent persons namely Mr.Venkata Rao, Dr. Srinivasa Raghava Ayyangar; Mr. M.S.Ramasvami Ayyar, Mr.T.S. Rajagopalan Ayyar, Mrs. M.R.Rāmasvāmiśivan and Mr.T.V.Subba Rao strongly supported the resolutions moved at the conference.

Towards the end, the chairman observing that the resolutions have been very well discussed, once again read the text of the resolutions with the necessary verbal amendments and put to vote which was carried unanimously by its members and other dignitaries present at the conference.

In addition to the change in the nomenclature of the art, the participants of Music Academy Conferences, Madras, also suggested certain significant changes with regard to the aspects concerning the presentation of the dance such as -

1. changes in the costume :

Heavy costume and ornaments which affected the free execution of movements by the dancer, thereby reducing the grace and charm of the dance, should be dispensed with.

## 2. Change in the instruments:

Using **vinā** and **tambūra** in place of clarionet probably intended to cautiously dispel the influence of the then existing nautch and more so to bring about the melodic beauties of the native band of instruments was suggested.

With the passage of time, the renaissance movement and the efforts of those who struggled for the revival of the art of **Bharatanatyam**, bore fruits as the art survived and took a new lease of life. This can be best evidenced from the complimentary message received by **E.Krsna Ayyar**, in connection with his 61st birthday celebration. The message was sent by none other than "the erstwhile leader of the anti-nautch movement and in this capacity his one time opponent Dr. Mrs. **Muthulaksmi Reddi**, who said that E.Krsna Ayyar had been devoted to a worthy cause and had done a great service to the South Indian art of Bharatanatyam by regenerating and restoring it to its original purity and dignity. She noted that it had become a popular art not only in every household but also in all educational **institutions**<sup>(1)</sup>.

Interestingly, it was after witnessing the dance performance of Pandanallur **Sabhāraṅjitam**, arranged by Music Academy, that Smt.Rukminidevi Arundale, was inspired and impressed by the beauty and legacy of the art of Bharatanatyam, that she decided to learn the art inspite of several constraints. As a result she learnt the art from stalwarts like Sri Meenaksi **sundaram Pillai** and Smt.Gouri **ammāl**. She was a pioneer in bringing about systematic and institutionalised training of Bharatanatyam by establishing the institution "**Kalāksetra**" which has become the temple of Bharatanatyam, and several eminent dancers, dance teachers-chore-

(1) '**Sruti**' - Indian classical **music** and **dance** magazine. Madras; issue **No.27/28**, December 1986/ January 1987, P.36

ographers of today can be traced to this Alma-mater - 'Kalāksetra'. The credit of producing numerous captivating dance-dramas goes to Smt. Rukminidevi and the band of musicians, art lovers and other associates of Kalāksetra.

In the due course, innumerable Sabhas and Organisations sprung up to encourage the art of dance and its platform created good opportunities to as many dancers (who included the girls from respectable families also) to exhibit their talents and also in providing the richness and beauty of the divine art - Bharatanatyam.

#### Present day Scenario of Bharatanatyam:-

Today Bharatanatyam has become the greatest pride of cultural heritage of India. The art form so laboriously cultivated and meticulously preserved for centuries, had no doubt suffered emasculation and neglect, yet withstood the ravages of time and emerged unscathed and successful as a result of the dedicated and single minded efforts of the sensitive crusaders of the revivalist movement.

Presently there is an overabundance of dancers, dance teachers and institutions of dance and awards, titles in recognition of their merits are frequently bestowed. Not only in the National level, but the art has won international appeal and has exercised its strong influence on the west due to which many foreigners have become dedicated practitioners of the art of Bharatanatyam. Unlike the hey days, presently there is considerable increase in the number of male Bharatanatyam dancers which is indeed an encouraging feature. Today the art form is provided with ample support from official cultural agencies, Sabhas, Academies and fine arts enthusiasts, who have taken up the role of heyday patrons and promoters of this art form.

Since four decades, many literate people with artistically inclined minds, have entered the arena of this functional art and have preserved the classical idiom and valued traditions of the Bharatanatyam in its true form, through their many productions which are earmarked for its professionalism and creativity. In addition to the practical orientation of the art, the artists of today are provided with better awareness regarding the theoretical aspects relating to the art as very often, the two comprehensive terms Tradition and Innovation have become the subjects for discussion among scholarly exponents and connoisseurs of art in the recent times.

Truly speaking, 'Tradition' is the accumulated heritage of centuries of art, handed over to the posterity. Every new act in the art which may be a change in substance or spirit, if made meaningful, relevant and true to the inner laws of the art is referred to as 'Innovation'.

Changes and innovations are significant to the survival and sustenance of any art form and in this respect, Bharatanatyam is no exception to it. In the present day, the practitioners of the art of Bharatanatyam have adapted the form and content of the art, aesthetically to the changing needs and temperament of the present dynamic **society**. Any change upholding the valued traditions and aesthetic standards of the art are necessary, nay, inevitable to avoid cultural stagnation.

The role and adaptability of the art form in accordance with changing needs and in different contexts and places, over the periods in the history of Bharatanatyam are quite interesting to note. The art when practised within the precincts of temple was more in the nature of prayer and dedication, which had a vital role in the different modes of worship of the presiding deity of the temple. In the context of court dancing,

the form and content of the art(form) got modified and the artist was more a performer than a devotee and was no more conditioned by the rules set forth by the Agama sastras. The needs of the situation and place, demanded the performer to exhibit her artistic excellences to please the patron and the distinguished galaxy of artists, scholars and the like, adorning the court. The same art crossing the borders of its ritualistic connotations of the past and bereft of the stipulated regime of the court dancing, has now metamorphosed into an educative, informative and enlightened recreation in the present day.

Most of the practitioners of the art, without swerving from the essentials of the sampradāya or tradition are diligently catering to the needs and demands of the society in required measures and at appropriate stages. As a result of maintaining its pace with the march of time, the art form has witnessed several changes in recent times, with regard to the aspects of performance such as the duration of the programme; adopting new ideas and themes for presentation, orchestra, the dance music, stage-props-lighting(as a result of technological advancement), costume of the dancer and so on. Certain changes have indeed facilitated the artiste and the connoisseurs to a great measure. But, in the name of novelty, some changes in the art form are constantly under challenge. How far do these changes which may or may not adhere to classical traditions be termed as innovations is the question that is pondered and bandied about by the exponents and savants in the field of art.

The answer to this question is given by scholars and professional artists who can be categorized into three groups. The first group, opines that any change as a result of slight deviation from the tradition, would lead to aesthetic crisis. The second category believes in changes within

tradition as innovation and the third cross section of scholars and exponents views innovation as the changes in the art, that can even cut across the boundaries of tradition.

In tune with the existing trends in **Bharatanatyam** it can be inferred that every change cannot be an innovation and any change need not be construed as a dilution and dismantling of the older artistic structures, styles and forms. In a nutshell, a change if it is true innovation will be well received by the art lovers and often gets accepted and sheltered in the mainstream of the art of Bharatanatyam, otherwise it gets washed away by the back waters and is sure to sink into oblivion.

A best illustrative example of such an innovative change is the systematisation of the format by Tanjore Quartette and their arrangement of the fundamental exercises or dance units from simple to complex patterns, that is still alive today, ofcourse with minor modifications but none could surpass the significance and utility of the format systematised by Tanjore Quartette. The Tanjore Quartette were well versed with the sastras and **sampradāya** or tradition. The framework of programme launched by them is not totally new, several sastras, predating their period and Serfoji-II's Nirupana format have indeed mentioned a recital programme which seems more or less akin to the format systematised by Tanjore Quartette, but the difference was that Tanjore Quartette, with amazing tenacity of purpose, and catering to the receptivity and appreciation of the connoisseurs of art, worked as lapidarists with utmost care and patience, in polishing, refining, the format and by removing the off-repeated items and adding new variegated dance numbers, yet making it concise. The change may not have been so much in substance as in its spirit and being firmly rooted in the past traditions, the format



meant to suit the changing times and represented its best elements which enabled the arrangement of sparkling gems, as a pattern of great beauty, each of which has an individuality but also a mutuality.

Hence, for the survival and sustenance of the art form like **Bharatanatyam**, such changes are felt necessary so that it is streamlined in order to be led by the currents of progress. As T.S. Eliot, the great American writer has rightly stated that 'Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves in the first place the historical sense which we may call nearly indispensable——and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence'<sup>(1)</sup>. 'And we do not quite say that the new is more valuable because it fits in, but its fitting-in is a test of its value - a test, it is true'<sup>(2)</sup>. Art no doubt has been considered as a medium to express and challenge the regimental thinking but such a mode certainly cannot presume licentious freedom to project some thing that would debunk our cultural ideologies and heritage. With a clear use of cognitive approach, one must discern that a tradition bereft of intelligence is not worth preserving and one should exercise a discovery learning as to what is the best life for oneself placed in a particular period and time.

One should also have a thoughtful consideration as to what is to be preserved from the past, what can be rejected and under what circumstances, modifications can be effected that would facilitate the enrichment of the art and development of the society.

(1) T.S. Eliot - Tradition and the Individual Talent (1917) in Selected Essays. The Pelican Book of English Prose: 2; P.471

(2) **Ibid** - P.473

Indeed, changing needs of society have wielded a great influence on the dance dramas of Bharatanatyam. Many contemporary dilemmas, highlighting the issues of women's rights, communal harmony and such other socially relevant issues, in addition to the already existing and ever inspiring themes culled from purāṇic lore are successfully attempted in the dance-dramas by the present-day artists and choreographers. Some of them have given undue importance to body language or Sarirabhinaya in the technique to portray such themes sidelining the sāttvikābhinaya\* while, others opposing to such a trend, emphasise that the Angikabhinaya (by means of sarifa and cestākṛta abhinaya) have to supplement sattvikabhinaya but surely cannot supplant the latter. They hold the view that the entire gamut of feelings and emotions could be best-projected through sattvikabhinaya or psycho-physical representation, irrespective of the theme selected. It is quite convincing that if sāttvikā abhinaya is not so very important, then the sastras and sampradāya need not have enunciated the significance of it, which indeed has a better evocative power of rasanubhuti or aesthetic pleasure in the sahrudayas or aesthete. The rich vocabulary of Bharatanatyam has facilitated, the immense possibilities for the interpretation of varied themes ranging from religious to socially relevant ones. But much depends on the higher levels of cognitive capacities of the choreographer to develop it further and transform the contents into meaningful, purposeful and creative expressions without allowing it to lose its specific character in its endeavour. The efficacy of the power of imagination should transcend the routinisation of the art, so as to penetrate deep into the richness of the art and unearth that which is

According to Dr. Nataraja Rāmākr̥ṣṇa, eminent scholar in the field of dance, Sāttvikā abhinaya is defined as the expression of the soul.

latent and hidden in order to broaden the art-understanding and expand the horizons. Not only in themes, but even in pure dance or *Nritya* of Bharatanatyam; the dancer without violating the basic principles of the art is free to draw on his or her perceptions of the art to create innovative *adavu* patterns that are marked for its arresting nature and aesthetic appeal.

The mushroom growth of numerous dance schools today has led to the phenomenal increase of dancers and the dance teachers alike. This proliferation in the art has yielded to both positive and negative effects.

The discerning public in general and the connoisseurs of art, not the least, the dancers in particular are in a more advantageous position than ever before since many authentic books, journals on the art of Bharatanatyam known for its educative and informative value, some of the documentary films on the hey day practitioners of the art, the research oriented approach of several seminars, lecture-demonstrations and discussions among the scholars and exponents of the art, organised by cultural agencies and academies, have truly harnessed the growth of intellectual knowledge among dancers, which are not only theory based but have been made intensely practical also. Abundant new dance compositions marked for its expressive value enhancing the charm of dance as well as the song are constantly being added to the existing repertoire of Bharatanatyam. Marvellous compositions of the past, which are **remarkable** for its richness and variety are also being revived and presented by the professional dancers in their recitals, thus equipping the repertoire of Bharatanatyam with valuable additions which in turn have given the art, a widened scope for horizontal and vertical coverages. Nevertheless to the

to the appreciative standard of the art, there is a growing feeling among savants, regarding the unsatisfactory nature of the average training in the art received by some of the amateur practitioners, who have many avocations in addition to dancing to be pursued and such frenetic activity, naturally tells upon the standard of their art. The rich art of dancing being a rare accomplishment demands a disciplined training from deserving students who have a high achievement motivation to undergo the rigours of professional training\* and a 'will to achieve' to reach the standard of excellence. It is also true that this mastery-proficiency can be attained under the able guidance of knowledgeable guru who is equally sincere and devoted to the art, as ought to be the student.

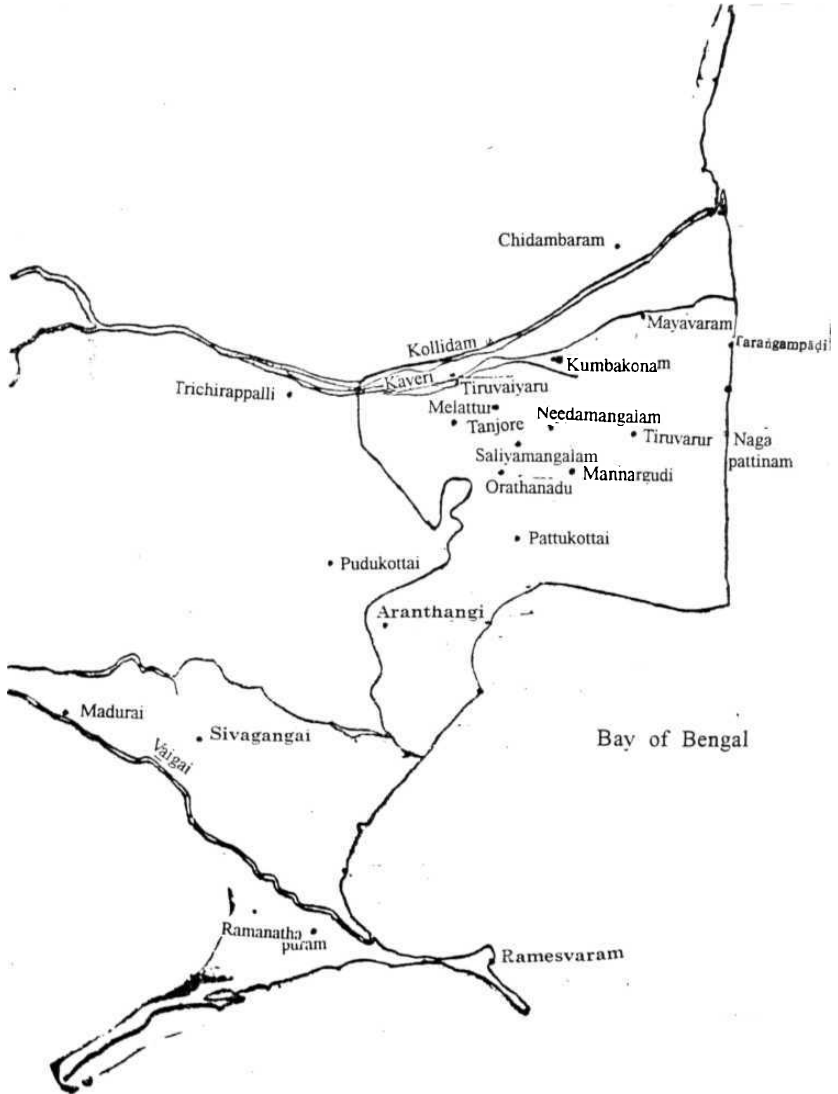
To day the ethos of commercialisation has permeated into the sphere of Art, making the art and the artists as marketable products lacking in creativity. Some of the artists with the sole aim of remaining in the lime light are catering to certain demands of the uninitiated public deficient in good taste. In this direction the role of the patrons and connoisseurs of the art becomes equally important who have to develop an uncanny shrewdness to discern good from bad and give a cultural

According to Smt. Tilakam, the practice session of the then dancers (as told by her grand mother Smt Kamalam) in the Silambakūdam (practice hall) began early in the morning in the nattuvanar's house. Starting with the body exercises, the dancers practised different adavu groups rigorously in perfect araimandi Posture. This basic stance is said to have been given much importance and in order to attain perfection in the art only a single item in the format was taken up for day's practice. In addition to this, the dancers were also taught Sanskrit and Telugu languages by the scholars in the Silambakūdam as the knowledge of these languages was considered very essential for the understanding of the meaning of the lyrical text and better comprehension of the character to be portrayed through vivid facial expressions, importantly by means of Sāttvikābhinaya. Though Sāttvikābhinaya does not belong to the realm of acquired learning much depends on the fulsome involvement of the artiste to become part & parcel of the character in order to effectively communicate the precise shadings of the character suggested by the text.

lead to discourage art devoid of its higher ideals, richness and its pristine glory. The wisdom gained from the anti-nautch movement, should remain afresh in the minds of the custodians (the artists, patrons and art lovers) of the art to carefully gauge and stem the unsavoury trends eroding this many splendoured art - Bharatanatyam in order to facilitate its onward march of progress.

## APPENDIX-I

Map showing the extent of Maratha Rule in Tanjore\*



K.M. Venkatramayya - Administration and Social Life under the Maratha Rulers  
of Thanjavur. Tamil University, Tanjore. 1984

## APPENDIX-II

A. Śarabhendra Stuti-Śloka Va Arva :- Manuscript No.:-1853; D.No.2178.

This manuscript contains a collection of ślokas in Marathi and Sanskrit written from the pen of court poets in praise of their patron king **Serfoji-II**. These ślokas are typical of the traditional form of eulogistic poetry rich in similes. The king has been showered high encomiums for his good qualities, generosity, valour and scholarship in different fields. The list of the names of some of the poets who composed these slokas is as follows :-

1. Utke Govindācārya
2. Nrsimha Sāstry
3. Krsnasvāmi
4. Muttusvami Diksitar
5. Hirusvami Ghatke
6. Subba Diksit
7. Tammācārya
8. Raṅganāthakavi
9. Cakravarti.

As a sample, some of the ślokas written by Utke Govinda Caryā, Muttusvami Diksitar and Subba Diksitar along with its' paraphrase are given below :

Utke Govinda Cārya

Paraphrase of the Slokas -

1. **Sloka** in Marathi :-

By whose grace Sage Markandeya was blessed with longevity, one who protected his devotee Bhadrāyū and in the battle field, at the sight of whom even the mighty demons tremble with fear, may ~~that~~ Lord Siva,

**the** consort of Goddess Gouri fulfill all the desires of Sarabhendra Bhupati

## 2. Sloka in Sanskrit -

In this **śloka**, the word **Vrsa** meaning Bull is personified as Dhanna or the Universal laws of righteousness.

Lord Siva in conversation with Lord Rama explains about the righteous conduct (Dhanna) corresponding to each of the four Yugas or ages of the world Viz., **Kṛtayugā**, Tretayuga, Dvaparayuga and Kaliyuga. Lord Siva states that Dhanna in Kṛtyuga is steady and well balanced on four feet, in Tretayuga and Dvaparayuga it balances on three and two feet respectively. But in Kaliyuga every thing being evil personified, Dhanna trembles on one foot. Yet, King Sarabhendra on seeing the Bull(Dharma) balancing on one foot, procreated the other three feet and presented the Bull to Lord Śiva, thus ensuring that Dhanna in his period is sturdy based.

This **śloka** is indicative of King Serfoji's donation of Silver Bull to the Big temple. In this context, the poet has skillfully enlogised his patron as the protector of Dhanna.

## 3. Sloka in Sanskrit -

While Churning the milky ocean (**Kṣīrasāgaramānthana**) evolved the Kalpa vrksa or the celestial tree which is said to bestow everything one desires. Unlike **Indra**, the king of gods who implanted this tree in his paradise, King Sarabhendra created several such celestial trees **and** generously distributed them among Brahmins. Hence, how can this generous king be compared to that greedy Indra.



Muttusvami Dikṣitar

Sloka in Sanskrit -

Oh! Lord Viṣṇu, you had delighted the Brahmins in your first incarnation (Sāfar or fish-Matsyāvatāra) by saving the vedas without much effort.

Now in the form of King Śarabhendra, you see all the Brahmins in the form of gods who bless you with a long life.

Subba Dikṣit

Sloka in Sanskrit -

By the valour and fame of King Śarabha, the Sun and Moon fade away and move like sentries in the Universe ruled by the king, day and night alternately in turns.

## SLOKAS

॥ गोविंदान्यायः ॥  
 ज्याचे पूर्णरूपे मृकं दुस्तुत तो दीर्घो  
 युक्तालाभला ॥ व्याहारीं पिरतां  
 स्वभक्तवराजो भद्रायुलाभला ॥  
 ज्याते देवुनि थोर देव हिंरणी तेथ  
 र्यरा कांपती ॥ देवो तो शर भेंद्र भूप  
 तिलकादृष्टार्थगोरी पती ॥ १ ॥ ॐ ॥

१॥ राजर्षिः शरभेंद्र ॥

द्रभूपतिलको धैर्यपादं चंप  
 श्यामादचतुष्टयान्वितमतिस्व  
 पंचनिर्मायतं ॥ भूयादस्य तु श  
 श्वती स्थितिरिति श्रीशंभवे द  
 नवान्समं श्रीशिवरामभाषि  
 तमिति ह्यद्य प्रती मो वये ॥ श्री  
 रांबो निधिमंथनो हवमनाया  
 संयदृष्टागतं स्वर्गे कल्पमहीरु  
 हं प्रतिदिनं स्वर्थं हियोरक्षति ॥  
 निर्माय स्वयमेव भूरि फलदं प्रा  
 दाद्विजेभ्यस्तुतं राजर्षिः शरभें  
 द्रभूपतिलकः कासौ कलव्यो म  
 रेटा ॥ ३ ॥

॥ मुदुसामिदीक्षित ॥ श्लोक ॥  
 परं मोहं नीतावशापरतनुमं वेत्ति  
 यितृणां समुद्धर्तुं वेदान्शरभप  
 दपूर्वक्षितिपते ॥ अथादृष्ट्वा सर्वेक्षि  
 ति विबुधरूपेण विबुधां जमोघा  
 र्गभिस्ते विपुलतरमायुर्विदधते ॥ २ ॥

॥ मुदुदीक्षित ॥

श्रीमकीर्ति

प्रतापो निरुपमविभ्वो ते जसां  
 सार्वभौमो निर्जितस्वीयभासा  
 हिमरुचि तरणीयामि क्व प्रणी  
 य ॥ अंतां जागरमध्येशरभनर  
 पतेः स्थापयामास नृणो यदा  
 त्रिं वासरं च भ्रमणपरवशौ जा  
 गतौ स्तो विशायात् ॥

B) Sabdams in praise of Raja Serfoji-II written by an unknown author,  
Catalogued in the Telugu-Manuscripts (B.11609) - Tanjore Sarasvati  
Mahal - Library :-

తాకుకుజ్జకు - జనకు - జేజే జనజన జనకు కుంతరికిడతక -  
కుకుంకుంతునకతి - తేయి - తతచా - రాజశ్రీభాసలకులచంద్రా - రతిపతి  
సుందర రాజనరేంద్రా - రాజతులజమహారాజనుజ - శరభోజిరాజ మహారాజా  
పారకు - సలాసు - షడ్జగత్కవికీర్తన తీర్థిగిణిసోమ ॥

ధీనునకిడనకజ్జేవా - జేవారితడగతకతక్షిణ్తా తకతాహిత ధీనుత  
జేవా - జగ - భువరూపణలాలా - ప్రభా తులజేంద్రనివాలా - వరభాసల  
కుల భాసలా - శరభోజిరాజభూపాలా - సలాసు తద్విద్యగ్గతకవిదక్షిణ్  
షడ్జగత్కవికీర్తన తీర్థిగిణిసోమ ॥

నవారిననరే - శరీకుజనకుజేన - కుకుంతురకు - తకణకనక  
జేకణ - క్షిణజగగజగత్ - కుంతరి = కిడతక - ద్రుగిడుతధిమితీయి -  
నవాహనహనా - నేయితనవా - షారాధారలు కని - కరానపాంగడ -  
తిరాన కలమిత - అగాధిపతులజ - నరాధిపసుత - కవరాజనుత -  
మహారాజ శరభోజి - రాజచంద్రా పరాకు సాదేరు - సలాసురే - కిడతక  
జగత్క - డగత్క జగత్క - జగత్కుకుంతునకవికీర్తన తీర్థిగిణిసోమ ॥ - ౩

तश्चेतक - जगता - जगजगतकुञ्जतक धरिता - धरि  
 अग्निनक्तिगन्धर्षण - धणतश्चेतुतकश्चेता - तक - श्रीकरगुणगम्भीरा  
 - कम्पाकर सुरगम्भीरा - रत्नाकर समगम्भीरा - रणभोकर सुजना  
 धरा - स्ववर्गीकृत नन्मथाकारा - सरसकण्ठादारा - श्री तुळजाराज  
 वरवाला - शरभोजिगज हंभीरा - भक्तिभञ्जिर मेलु - शाभासु सलामु  
 - किटनकडगतक - डगतकजगतक - धर्ळगुतक - धिकितक तधि  
 गिणतोम् ॥

-४

तद्वणतक - तकधण - तसेनुत - तक - तश्चेतश्चेतरि -  
 तकजगतरे - तक - तधणतसेनुतधिमि - तक्तिगतकधित -

तेयिततत्ता - कन्नुतविलुनुनि - गन्न रूपपसुन - चेन्नुग निनु  
 कटुगोक्षमोदुतु वलु - मिन्नग मोहसु - कोन्न नन्नु इख - कन्ने  
 गयक - तिकगतेनुसु - सततगुण तुळजेन्द्रकुमारा - वन्नेकाड  
 शरभोजेन्द्रा - भञ्जिर मेलु शाभासु सलामु - तांगिडुतांगिडुतांगिट -  
 किटतकि - धी - धिन्नगिट किटकि - ॥ २ ॥ तांकिटतकधरि  
 किटतक - धरि किडु तकधिमिकिटतक - तक्तधिरिणतोम् ॥ -५

तद्धि - किटतकधि - तद्धिदिङ्कुणक - दिङ्कुतककुजग -  
 तकुं धरि किटतक - धीनुतहत्तसेकु - शेत्त शेनकिट - धिमितधिमित  
 धिमि - तत्ताहत्तकिटतरि - किटतकता ॥ तेयिततत्ता - राज  
 राजरवि - कोटिनेजवहु - राजविजित सुरराज विभववर - भोज  
 तुळजमहाराजतनुज शरभोजिराज महाराज विडौजा - पराकु -  
 निनुनम्मिति सलामु - धरिकु धणकुशेता - तधी - तधी -  
 धी - ता - तकजरि किटतक - धरितधणतसेनुत - तहत्तकिटतक  
 - तधणतसेनुतधिमिकिट - तधिरिणतोम् ॥

### APPENDIX-III

The text of the Nirūpaṇa "Sakhine Nāyakice Srama Nayakasakalaun Saighaṭanōpāya Karanyāci Kalpita Kathā" set to raga Arabhi, Adacou(Miśracāpu) tala, authored by Raja Serfoji-II is as follows :-

॥ ५, सखिने नायकीचे श्रम नायकास कळउन संघटनोपाय कल्पित कथा ॥

(b)

राग : आरभि

॥ जयजय ॥

ताळ : अडाचो.

॥ पल्लवि ॥

जय इच्छित जरा संघ । जय गच्छित भवबंध ॥

जय तोषित विबुध । जय दयित सधा जयजय ॥

॥ अ. पल्लवि ॥

जय अक्कूर, वरद । जय हत नत खेद ॥

जय तनुजित जलद । जय भक्त मोद ।

जय नवनीत चोर । जय गोप वधुजार ॥

नय नमित मंदार । नत शिवा धारा ॥ जय जय ॥ -१

राग : आरभि.

॥ शरण ॥

ताळ : अडाचो.

॥ पल्लवि ॥

शरणु शरणु खगेन्द्र केतन ।

शरणु देवकी नंदन ॥

॥ अ. पल्लवि ॥

शरणु नारदनुत पुरातन ।

शरणु मुरवर वामन ॥ शरणु ॥

शरणु शरणु पवित्र कीर्तन ।

शरणु शुभ कर चितन ॥

शरणु गोपी गोमय वर्धन ।

शरणु धृत गोवर्धन ॥ शरणु शरणु ॥ -१

रातः आरम्भः

॥ शेषः ॥

तद्धा : अडाची

॥ सप्तकाशः ॥

तां तां ये ये तथै र्थै दूतत ॥

॥ अस्माक ॥

तां धिता था धै तां धिता था धै ।

तां धिता था धै । तां धिता था धै ॥

तां धिता था धै । तां धिता था धै ॥

तद्धि तक् धरि किटक् धळ्गुतक्

धिकितक् तद्धिगिणतों ॥

त तक् धितक् धरि किटक् धळ्गुतक्

धिकितक् तद्धिगिणतों ॥

तद्धि किटक् धरि किटक् । तक् धिकिट् तांक्

तरिक्किटक् धळ्गुतक् तद्धिगिणतों ॥

तक् तद्धिगिणतों । तक् तद्धिगिणतों ॥

तां दिग् दिग् ॥

धिकितक् धिकितक् धळ्गुतक्

धिकितक् तद्धिगिणतों ॥

॥ आरम्भः ॥

ता धणत तक् रित् झंता

धण तक् तरित् झंता ।

ता धणत तक् धणत धण

झणु झणु धिमि ।

धिमिकिट् किटक् धळ्गुतक् दिक्

धोणुतक् तक् तद्धिगिणतों ॥

॥ रक्ति ॥

राग : आरभी

॥ गोलु ॥

ताळ : अबाचो.

तद्धि किटतक ताहत शंतरि था  
 धित धि धि धि दक ।  
 तक त्रिधकिटतक ताहत शंतरि था  
 धित धि धि धिदक ।  
 तद्धिता शंतरि था धित धि धि धिदक ।  
 ताद्धिता ह तरिकिटतक था तक  
 दत शंतरि किटतक धे शंत  
 कणंत कणंत तरुतक धिमि  
 तरिकिटतक धित धीनु हगुद तक  
 तधिमिणधों ॥

-१

त धण धणत शंतरित किणण कत  
 शत जगत कुकुदरि ॥  
 धणत शनुत धिमितक धरिकिटतक  
 धण शनु शनु धिमिकिट तरि  
 तक धिकितक तधिमिणधों ॥

-२

तधीनु तक शंतरित शंतरित तद्धिदि  
 कुडि कुंदरि तक ।  
 डि डि कुडि कुडि डि कुडि कुंद दरि  
 तडि कुंद कुंदत कुंदरि किटतक  
 तक तधिमिण धों ॥

-३

॥ जति ॥

तधितां धितां हत शंतरित  
 शत रुतधीनु तक धीनुत तकिटतरि  
 धैता तथै तद्धितक धिकि  
 तधिमिणधों ॥



॥ ररिग ॥

राग : आरभी

ताळ : अडाचो.

॥ शब्द ॥

तद्धण ताहत तक शैकिण कत  
 झंत झंतरि किटतक ।  
 तधण तकत श्नुतक तर्धमितक  
 तधरिफिट तकता थार्थ दत्तथां ॥

॥ साहिस्म ॥

पशुत दिवसाची भेटे गोपाला ॥  
 विसरफास जणू मजला ॥  
 नमन करोनि तुजला ॥  
 मीं प्रार्थितं तुझ्या दयेला ॥

॥ शब्द ॥

तंदक तंदक तंदक थादि दिगि दिदि  
 गिदि दिगि धीतदक तक तदांत ता  
 तरुत धित दांतक धितक धरिफिटतक  
 तक झंतक धित्तक धरिफिटतक ।  
 तशंतक झंतरुत किटतक  
 तक तर्धगिणयां ॥ ✓

वर्ण

राग : आरभि ]

[ अड चौताल

॥ पल्लवि ॥

जे तूजी प्राण नायकी ॥ तिजेची मी जाण सखी ॥ ५ ॥

॥ अ. पल्लवि ॥

कृष्णा ऐक हे हितगुन ॥ सांगां याशी आले तूज ॥ अ ॥

## स्वर

धा प पा म ग रि । मा ग री रि स ध । री ध रि स सा ।  
 ध स री रि । म ग रि री म प ध । रि ध स सा ध ध प ।  
 रि स ध स ध प । ध पा म्म ग रि ॥ १ ॥

## ॥ साहित्य ॥

फार हे नवल । बाधते मज की । ते तरिहिसे ।  
 जगि फार । कठिणणी तरिहि । मज कळे सकल ।  
 सरल जिनस । तिचा समज ॥ १ ॥  
 ॥ फार ते नाजुक पुतली ॥

## ॥ स्वर ॥

सा रि सा ध स रि । मा ग री म म प ।  
 ध रि स ध सा । स ध प म ग रि ॥ २ ॥

## ॥ साहित्य ॥

हैं जनांस मनि । ठाडके सकल । शिण न सहे निज  
 मणउनि ॥ २ ॥

## ॥ स्वर ॥

रि म ग रि री । स रि स स धा । स सा रि ।  
 म ग रि म प ध । स ध प प म ग रि ॥ ३ ॥

## ॥ साहित्य ॥

सहज मनी । जरि आठवी । उनास । तरि  
 उळमलि । बहुतनि परि ॥ ३ ॥

## ॥ स्वर ॥

प ध पा म्म ग रि । म ग री स स ध ।  
 रि ध सा । स ध प म ग रि ॥ ४ ॥

## ॥ साहित्य ॥

परिसे अधिक । वचनाशि जरि ॥ चमके निज  
 हृदयि बहुत ॥ ४ ॥

॥ स्वर ॥

रि री म ग री । प म ग रि म प ध स ।  
ध पा म ग रि ॥ ५ ॥

॥ सप्तहृत्य ॥

एजसि सली । हरि हरि बहुतवि । तुझा विरह ॥ ५ ॥

स्वर

म ग रि सा । ध स री । म प म पा ।  
स ध प ध पा । ध रि स ध सा । रि स धा ।  
स ध पा । ध प म ग रि ॥ ६ ॥

॥ साहित्य ॥

कुनुमहि । निजला । सलतसे । हरि न रुचे ।  
सुवसनही भ्रमते । बहुते । तुजविण कि ॥ ६ ॥

॥ रक्ति ॥

॥ पद ॥

राग : आरभि.

॥ पल्लवि ॥

ताळ : अशाबो.

उगवतां चंद्र राक्षी ।  
तापे तळमळिते अति ॥

॥ अ. पल्लवि ॥

छिऊ कां करिता पाण्याचा । सुरका मनी ।  
ठिणग्याचा ॥

॥ स्वर ॥

रिम गरि सरि ससध । ससरि मगर  
मपधरिध सधप मगरि ॥

-१

॥ साहित्य ॥

हरि निज रमण अनादर करि जरि तरि  
सुदतिचि कवण गति ॥

-१

गंध लावितांचि हातीं । तात्काळे ते पावे भ्रांति ॥  
फार आहे ते विचित्र । तरी ऐक इतकें मात्र ॥

-१

स्वरजती

॥ रक्ति ॥

रागः आरमि ]

[ अडाची ताळ

॥ स्वर ॥

सा सा री म्म ग रि प मा प म ग री घ प म ग रि ॥ १ ॥

॥ साहित्य ॥

तुजें रूपच हृदयांत जडलें निजशि हरि ।

॥ स्वर ॥

रि स रि म ग री स रि स ध स रि म ग रि म प घ  
सा घ पा म्म ग रि ॥ २ ॥

म ग रि रि स रि स स ध सा स री म ग रि म प घ घ रि  
स घ प म ग रि ॥ ३ ॥

॥ साहित्य ॥

हरितें यमते झडकरी निरखुनी ।  
बहुतचि अंधकार दिठी ॥ ३ ॥

मनि चमक न घरनि कृष्ण सांप  
निरखुनि कर पसरि तुं मणुनि ॥ ३ ॥

॥ स्वर ॥

प घ प प म ग रि प म ग रि स घ रि स रि म ग रि म  
प घ स घ स घ प म ग रि ॥ ४ ॥

॥ साहित्य ॥

सकल मुनिजन बहुत कठिण तप करिति हरि नुज  
निरतु मणुनि ॥ ४ ॥

॥ स्वर ॥

ध रि स स ध प प म ग री म प ध स रि म ग रि ध रि  
स ध पा म ग रि ॥ ५ ॥

॥ साहित्य ॥

परीस मग नवल किति हे तरि यदुर्गति  
हरि तव रमणीच निज ॥ ५ ॥

॥ स्वर ॥

स रि म ग रि स रि स स ध म सा रि म प ध स रि ध  
रि स ध पा म ग रि ॥ ३ ॥

॥ साहित्य ॥

सकल विसरतचि समजुनि आठवि निज  
हृदई तुलाच हरि ॥ ६ ॥

॥ रक्ति ॥

॥ अभिनय पद ॥

राग : आरभि.

॥ पल्लवि ॥

ताळ : अडाची.

मन तूझे पांयां जडलें ।  
डोळ्या रूप ठसावळें ॥

॥ अ. पल्लवि ॥

जिकडें तिकडें पाहे तुजला ।  
तुजविना न कळे तिजला ॥

तूण हलताचि बाहेरी ।  
उठोनि बैसे शेजवरी ।  
रोख लाउनीया द्वारा ।  
पदर घेते शिरावरी ॥

अणी तीचे श्रम पाहून ।  
कोणतरी व्यसनं कृप्या म्हणतां होउनि दंगा  
पुसे कोठें आहे सांग ॥

-२

बारं बारं सांगू किं ।  
मानोते ते फार खंति ।  
तीजवरी कृपा करी ।  
शरभेंद्राचा कैवारी ॥

-३

॥ रक्ति ॥

राग : आरभो.

॥ तिल्लाना ॥

ताळ : अशाचो.

ता तत्ता रितक श्रोत धिनेनं किटतक ।  
तां तां तां तक्कणतक धरिक्किटतक धी  
धीं धीं दगदु तक्किट वरि तंदिदि णादिदि  
दिरि तिल्लाना दिरिणा तंदीरि धिन्नांतक  
धरिक्किटतक था तिधन्ना तक धरि  
किटतक थै धिन्ना तक धरिक्किट तक  
ता थैय्य तंदिकु तक तंदिदि कुडि  
कुद कुकुंदरि किटतक तधण तरित  
धिमित धणंत झनुत धिमि तक्किट तक  
तां धीतो तोंकिट तक तातो धीतो किट  
तक थै तोधिनें तोंकिट तक ॥

॥ साहित्य ॥

सदय होयि मुरारि हे तू अवधारी ।  
आतांतरी तुजविना सांग हरि ॥  
तिचे महाशिण कोण वारी ॥

ततरि तत्त धण तत्त शुत धिमित हि हि कुतक  
ताथै तद्वरि किटतक थाताथै तद्वरिक्किट  
तक थैता थै तद्वरि किटतक ॥

-१

## ॥ रक्ति ॥

राग : आरभि

॥ 'अभिन्नप' पद ॥

ताळ : अडाचो.

बायकांचा हा स्वभाव ।

उगाच नाथावरि रूपाचें ॥

फारच करितां हीं प्रीती ।

मानीत अमणें स्त्रियांनीं अति प्रीतीने

नायकाम सहजे फटून नेणतेपणें अधिक

उणे बोलणें हा न हो अवगुण ॥

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तियेवरी तू यदनाथा । करीत होताशी अधिक ममता ।

तेव्हां बोलता । काय घडलें की अवचित ॥

-२

आता घरी तुझी कांता । फार पावेदा अवस्था ॥

दया करावी तिजवरी अर्वा । शस्त्रेस्तुता ॥

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## ॥ रक्ति ॥

राग : आरभी

॥ जक्किणी ॥

ताळ : अडाचो.

तसें तक्रांतारित तक । तक धिमित जगतारित ततकिट

तक धणंत श्रुतारिकित्थी । तचो तोंग तमित तक

धरिकित्तक तगणक तक श्रुतारि कित्तक

धिमिकिमितो तक तधिगण तो ॥

धमसरि रिसरि मागरी मम पधध

सरिमगरि सधधपसपा ॥

## ॥ साहित्य ॥

अनेक नायिका माजि । तिला तुला फार राजी ।

का असा कोप आजि । धरिला कांकण्याचो ॥

मरि मगरि मपध कुत किटधिमि मपध  
 मरि तक धिकि तधिगिण तों ॥  
 तकतक इतरिकिट तरिकिटतक तक धिमि  
 उकु जनु धरिकिटतक तों तक धणे कुतक  
 इतरि किटतक तक तधिगिणथों ॥  
 यल्लां यल्लिलां लाले हेई जाउमेरे ।  
 यल्लां यल्लिला लाले शीरी मगरि पमम्म गरि रिमा  
 धध पप मगरिमा ॥

-१

मागरि मरिगिय धध मरि मगरि रिप  
 मम्म गरि मरि मधधय ॥

-२

धापपमगरि सारिमगरि मरिमप  
 धम धध पपगरिस ॥

-३

माद्र धपपा मगरि मरि ममपम पप  
 गरिमरि मधमरि मगरि ममपम पध  
 मामधप पाम पधनिस धध पमगरिस ॥

-४

॥ रीत्त ॥

॥ गीत ॥

राग : आरभि

ताळ : अडाची

सानि धसा रिरिमा मगरिरि ।  
 सासनि मीइ सा००ग उउउ हे ।  
 को ऊऊ धधमा मपध ससा ।  
 धरि सनिध सस ऊऊणा अ अस हरि ।  
 नव्हे एए एकी इ रिरि माममग ।  
 रिपमा मगरि रिसनि धस इइ हे एएए ।  
 दुसरि इइइ सा अअ रिमा ।  
 धधपा मपम गरि रिमा ।



जा पा खी । मा अ झी इ सखी इइ तुला ।  
 घेडा । तू मगरि सनिध सरिममपा ।  
 मधध मध उउ झा अअ संगती इ ने ।  
 ने एए पो ओ धपा मारि ।  
 ममपा मगरि माप ऊऊ रमणा अअ शि ।  
 टा अ को ऊऊ नि झा अ धमप धसा ।  
 सामनि धध पमपा मगरि अलि इइइ ।  
 प्रौ उउ इ चतुर ना अअअ रि ।  
 सरिमपध धम धधध पमगरि सरि अ ।  
 इ का अअ जा अअ ।

॥ रीति ॥

राग : आरभि

॥ प्रभव ॥

ताळ : आशाचोताळ

सरिसनि धमानि धरि ससरि ।  
 समरिप विमरविले एएए हंरि ।  
 ताती इइइ मामगरि रिमनि धध ।  
 समरिरी ममपचे एए आ अत्पलो ओ क ।  
 सकल हीं तिजला । धमप मगरिरी ।  
 सनिध धपा मपगरि अअअ दे एए वा ।  
 अधी इ क आ आदरा अरिसा ॥ जा ॥  
 मगरिरिस निमध धसरि मम अने । बडा ॥  
 दकु तकु धकतण शंत किटतक थां ।  
 मधपध मप मग रिरिमगरि ।  
 सरि झें । किकि किष्णा तरि ताकु तण झें तरि ।  
 इकु पम गरि मम पप धसमा ।  
 धध पपमग शकु झं झं किटतरि तक्कुड तां ।  
 दिं दिं धानुकत रिरि सामनि धध ॥

॥ रक्ति ॥

॥ त्रिपुट ॥

राग : आरभि

ताळ : अढाचोताळ.

रिपधम निधा ।

धसरि मगरि मपधध तक तकिटतक झें ।

तक्कुंतक धितकि झंत दिदि पपमगरि

रिसनिधध पामपधम सा ।

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धिकिधीनु कित तद्री किटुतक तां तळ धिकिट तां

तळ धिकिट ततां ॥

मामगरि सरिमसा निधरिममध तां तकिट तक

झें ऐं तरुंतकण धप पम पध सरिममप ।

मपधमम० तक झंतारि तद्वरि किटतक ।

धाधा किटतक तक रिसमध धपप ममरिनि मनिधप ।

धधित झनणत झं झं तरिकिटतक तद्वि तक तां ।

धिसरि पमगरिम ॥

-२

पाम पामगरिम तां तण थोंदि दत्तां ॥

-२

ऐं इ सें असे एण रिमागरि सरि ।

मागरि सरि सरि । मागरि ममप मपा ।

मअ ने एण क । हे गाऊ ऊ ऐ ऐ अमो ।

अरीमगरि मपधमा पधमसरि धरिस तां था अअ स

देण उ उत्तर त तकिट किट निधापप मगरिस ॥

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॥ रक्ति ॥

॥ श्लोकवर्ण ॥

राग : आरभि.

ताळ : अढाचोताळ.

॥ साहित्य ॥

येणीकणी करुनीयां अपुल्या करानें ।

तां रक्षिलें हरि तिला बहु आदरानें ।

ध्रिक्त्वरुनि निज 'अनां जरि टाकीशी रे ।  
दुःखाशि याचि विमरे मग ते कशी रे ॥

-१

॥ स्वर ॥

गिरि मनिधस्मा गीयरि मागरि पमपम गरि धधपा ।  
मपमागरि मपधधमा धरीधया पधा पम पमगरिम ॥

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॥ रक्ति ॥

॥ कउल ॥

राग : आरभि.

ताळ : अडाचौताळ.

तत्त किटवरि गुट्टु रि गुट्टु तकिट  
ध्रिक्किटतोंग तक्कु ध्रिक्कुतट गिण विनविने  
मीं तारिक्कु नोंगन तारिक्किटतक तक् थरि किटतक ।  
तों तरिक्किटतक तोंगु करमुगजोशुनि ।

तदं तदं । वंदुनि तुजला निज सुख देउनि  
तागी तिजला शरभेन्द्रस्तुत मुरळी लोला ॥

तद्धि तद्धित तो डगणं किटतक ।  
तक्कु ध्रिक्कु तकिणंत ताधिद्धी ।  
तों तों ननंतद्धि तोंनता तरिगुट्टु तिरिगुट्टु तक्कु ध्रिक्कुत ।  
किक्कुता दचा ॥

॥ राक्त ॥

राग : आरभी.

॥ मंगळे ॥

ताळ : अडाचौताळ.

॥ पल्लवि ॥

मंगळें लक्ष्मी नायकाशी ।

मंगळें तुज माधवाशी ॥

॥ अ. पल्लवि ॥

अंग जाच्या जनकाशी सागर सुख  
शयनाशी शुभ मंगळें ॥

दिव्य पश्चिन्द्रयानाशी ।

दैत्य वृंद दलनाशी ।

गन्धर्वा भक्षकाशी ।

भव्य शरभेन्द्रा पाळिशी मंगळें ॥

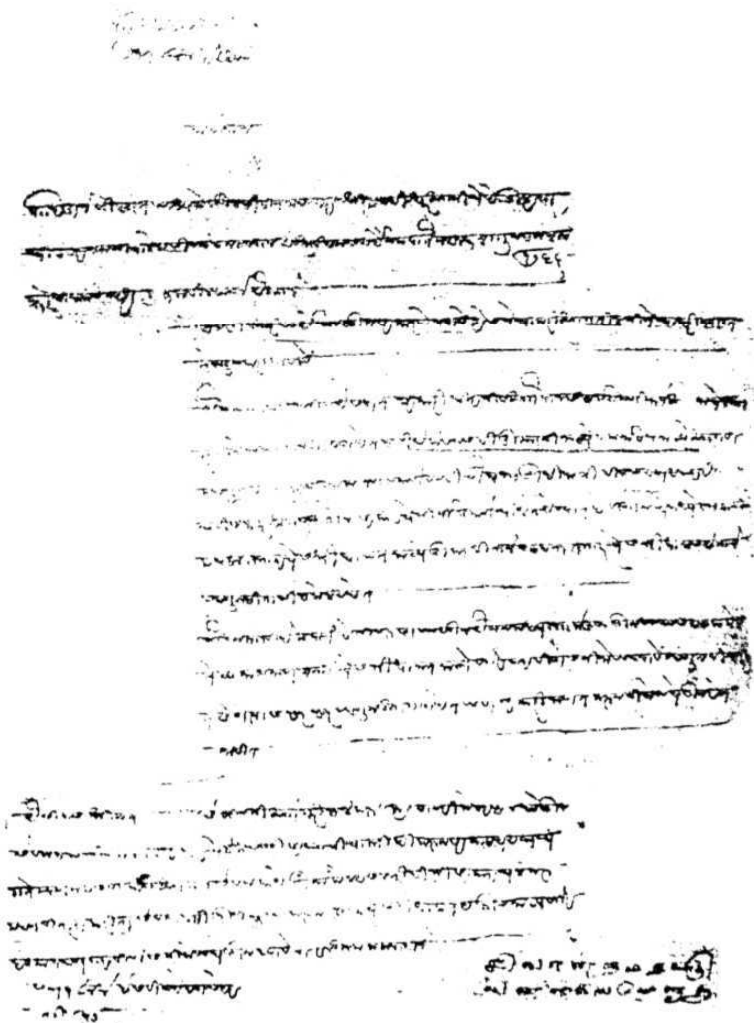
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## APPENDIX-IV

A) The text of the Lasya puspanjali composed by an unknown author catalogued in the Sanskrit Manuscripts (D. 10714) of Thanjavur Sarasvati Mahal Library is as follows :-

(अ) लस्यास्य पुष्पाञ्जलिस्त्रिरुत्तरे ॥ तत्रादौ जातुलक्षणी ॥ कुन्तीना  
 अकल्पमिजो तोयत्रयविबोधिनि ॥ सुन्दरस्तरुणाः प्रसूयु  
 देहानन्दयाविधौ ॥ इति प्रभुलक्षणी ॥ ततोऽनुचक्षणी ॥ अ  
 निवद्धनिबलं च द्विधागीर्तय युज्यते ॥ आन्त्रापाद्यं निबद्ध  
 स्याद्ध्यंताहपदादिभिः ॥ इति द्विविधगीर्तनं ॥ ततो गण  
 शापद्धं तु मंगलार्थं प्रयोजयेत् ॥ तेषां पदं वादयेत् सुकुल  
 गपरनामकं ॥ २ ॥ किञ्चित्स्फुरितकमाश्रित्यतिष्ठेज्जात्र  
 नि कोतरे ॥ वातिकेण च सायेण वाद्येनानुगतेन च ॥ ३ ॥  
 वंदेहं मथ मंदिराच्च कादिदैवता ॥ दूर्वादहं सुवीर्यम  
 रुहैवानुतंतु ॥ ४ ॥ स्वस्त्ववन्नापुर्ध्वं वाकं पूवेत्यादिदि  
 भक्तिः ॥ इति इन्द्राय नमः ॥ ददिणस्यादिदि ॥ यस्याद्या  
 यां यनद्यायां महांतं महिषासना ॥ ५ ॥ काकं उ  
 धरं वंदेय मय मवतां वरं ॥ इति यमाय नमः ॥ पश्चिमाधो धर  
 वंदे वरुणं मकरासनं ॥ ६ ॥ पाशाहस्तं दास्य वेदां सति तं स  
 लिलाधिकं ॥ इति वरुणाय नमः ॥ उत्तरस्यां कुक्षेरं च निवेदं  
 नरबाहवं ॥ यक्षारक्षः परीवारं मदायुधमहं ॥ ७ ॥ इति कुब  
 राय नमः ॥ इति दिग्देवता वंदनं कृत्वा ॥ अंतर्धानां त्रिकैश्वर्य  
 तिचेतां सिद्धयता ॥ ८ ॥ मोहयन् प्रविशेद्दंगं न लेको नोषनेते ॥

B) A Letter in Modi script dated 10th October, 1844 written by Sivahandam (one of the Tanjore Quartette) to king Sivāji-II is given below :-



## APPENDIX-V

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A. Interview with Prince Tulajendra Rāja Saheb and  
Sri A.Krsnasvāmi Mahādīk.

- (1) a) When did the term 'Sadir' originate?  
b) How did it originate?
- (2) Could you enlighten me on the development of Sadir in the court of Rāja Serfoji-II.
- (3) Can you tell me on the origin of Nirupana.
- (4) Could you throw light on the Sadir mādi and the Ratna Sabha mādi referred to in the Modi manuscripts.
- (5) Did the Sadir performances in the court mark any special occasion and purpose?
- (6) Was Sadir performed as solo or group dance?
- (7) a) When was Sadir organised in the court?  
b) What was the duration of Sadir performance?
- (8) Were the dancers given prior notice of the performances in the court?
- (9) Did Rājanartakis receive advance training from court musicians - nattuvarars?
- (10) Is it true that the royal women were experts in Sadir dance.
- (11) Could you tell me something about the Tanjore Quartette as court musicians and their contribution to Sadir.
- (12) Can you throw light on the controversy between Raja Serfoji-II and the Tanjore Quartette.
- (13) How were the court dancers rewarded financially?

- (14) Were there any Purva **raṅga** rituals involved prior to the performance of Sadir in the court?
- (15) Do you find any difference between the then Sadir and the present day **Bharatanatyam**?
- (16) May I have some information regarding the encouragement of **Bhāgavata-mēḷa nātakas** in the court of Raja Serfoji-II.
- (17) Can you enlighten me on the **Lāvaṇi**, **M5di** dance, **Kaṅcin** nautch and other **flok** arts that were prevalent during the period of Serfoji-II.
- (18) When were these dances performed in the palace?
- (19) Did there exist a friendship between Maharaja Svati Tirunāl of Travancore and King Serfoji-II.

(B) Interview with Guru Sri.Kittapa Pillai.

- (1) Could you tell me the details regarding the training received by Tanjore Quartette in the sphere of Music and Dance.
- (2) Were the dance compositions of the Tanjore Quartette a combined effort?
- (3) What according to you might have been the format of Sadir that was followed prior to the period of Tanjore Quartette?
- (4) What may have been the possible reasons for Tanjore Quartette to improvise the methodology of Sadir and systematise its format-presentation order of dance numbers-
- (5) Among the brothers, who conducted the dance in the court?
- (6) Did the format of Nirupana of King Serfoji-II wield its influence on the Tanjore Quartette in systematising the Sadir format?
- (7) Did the Quartette receive emoluments on a monthly basis in the court and were they given any special monetary benefits?
- (8) Did the Tanjore Quartette impart training in Sadir to temple as well as court dancers?



C. Interview with Smt.P.R.Tilakam.

- (1) Was your grandmother **Smt.Tiruvārūr Kamalam**, a court dancer or temple dancer?
- (2) Can you relate the experiences of **Smt.Kamalam** as a temple dancer
- (3) Could you give details regarding the performance of **Tyāgesār Kuravāñji** in the Tiruvarur Temple.
- (4) Could you high light the differences between the temple dance and court dance.
- (5) Were the dancers given specific training in abhinaya during the days of your grand mother?
- (6) What is meant by **Mōḍināṭyam**?
- (7) Do you **find** any difference between the then Sadir and present day **Bharatanatyam**?
- (8) What is your opinion of the present day training and instruction given to the students of Bharatanatyam?
- (9) What were the musical instruments used for Sadir performance?
- (10)a) Didn't your grandmother encourage you to learn dance?  
b) May I know the reasons as regards your decision to opt Music as profession instead of Dance.

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