

**PUNJAB FOLK DANCE TRADITIONS
AND
GURU NANAK BANI**

THESIS

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By

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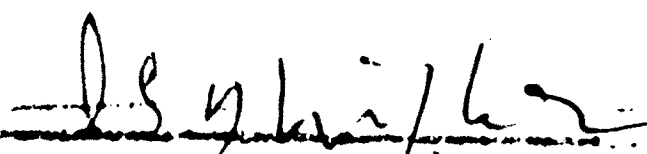
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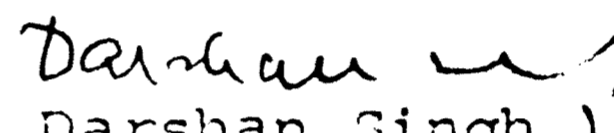
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the contents of the thesis entitled : PUNJAB FOLK DANCE TRADITIONS AND GURU NANAK BANI", constitute an original research work of Ms. Sneh Lata Badhwar carried out under our (joint) supervision and that the work has not been submitted for the award of any other degree anywhere.


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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dance has always been a medium to express the inner feelings of living beings. These are involuntary movements generated by emotions. Every living being is a bundle of emotions, which are actuated by joy, fear, sorrow or love. The love may be for material objects or for the Divine. However materialistic one may be, a stage comes, when an urge to know the real self springs up. This urge is the beginning of search for God and makes the man wander in various directions till he realises his oneness with the Divine. Such realisation fills him with bliss, and in that blissful stage he dances to give vent to his feelings of joy. Thus divine nature is inherent in dance. People through ages have danced to express the subtle feelings of love for God.

My grandmother was an ardent devotee of Guru Nanak and used to worship him with extreme devotion. She would recite Jap ji Sahib regularly, she would always call Baba Nanak as a redeemer of the world and whenever I took up a new assignment, she would bless me with the words "Baba will crown you with success." She would never be tired of narrating

the sublime teachings of Baba Nanak. Dance being my subject and coupled with this background, I was inspired to take up research work about the attitude of Guru Nanak towards the art of dance.

I was in search of a scholarly person under whose supervision and guidance, I could take up this challenging task. In my quest I met Dr Jatinder Singh of Govt College Mohali who was a colleague of mine and I broached my difficulties in finding a suitable guide. He took me to Dr Darshan Singh, the Chairman of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies, Punjab University, Chandigarh. When I expressed my earnestness in this direction, he in his graciousness accepted to guide me in this task. As I proceeded with the research, I was struck with awe of his indepth knowledge of Gurbani, and his sublime and benevolent attitude in guiding me. I am extremely grateful to him for permitting my indulgence even at hours when he was extremely busy with his multifarious academic engagements. Everytime I met him in connection with this research work, I found him extending a helping hand without any reservations and every time giving me new ideas in the field of research without which I could not have accomplished this herculean task.

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I am also thankful to Shri RK Aggarwal, Librarian of Government Girls College Sector 42, Chandigarh who helped in selecting the relevant books for study. Finally a word of special thanks to Shri A. Radha Krishnan and Shri Teja Patel who spent long hours in typing out the script.

I sincerely and unconditionally apologise
for any errors committed by me unconsciously in
interpreting or quoting the holy verses.

Sneh Lata Badhwar
(Sneh Lata Badhwar)

I N T R O D U C T O R Y N O T E

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Punjab occupies a most important and unique position in the early history and culture of the sub-continent because of its oldest civilization. The grandeur of ancient Punjab was the existence of Harappan culture which made it the leader of the most ancient civilized world. The Aryans came in waves from across the Himalayas and settled in Punjab ousting the original residents and pushing them southwards. However, in the parts of that region traditions of what had been an advanced culture still continued. In Eastern Punjab, the Aryans did not face any stiff resistance from the local population. According to K. Antonova, G. Bongard-Levin, G Kotovseky, the Dravidian languages exerted a marked influence in Indo-Aryans ones, although their interaction was of short duration. This fact finds support from linguistic analysis of Rig Veda and other samhitas.¹ As the Indo Aryans tribes advanced across Northern India their social and political organisation became more advanced. By and by a new culture took birth which was the amalgamation of Aryan and local tribes' achievements, giving rise to some sort of common culture.

1. A History of India, (Book I), P 22.

Punjab occupied a great seat of spiritual philosophy and learning. It is claimed that Rig Veda was composed in Punjab. The Puranas and Mahabharata were also written in Punjab. Similar has been the case with respect to the composition of Ramayana (by Rishi Valmiki). The ashram where Valmiki lived was located in Punjab, the site of which is about 11 Kms from Golden Temple at Amritsar. The discourse of Gita to Arjuna by Lord Krishna was given on soil of Punjab. Guru Nanak who preached the doctrine of universal brotherhood was born and brought up in Punjab. Adi Granth too was composed in Punjab.

Amongst the arts, dance is the most primitive and the most sophisticated. There is no civilisation or culture in the world where human bodily movements as a vehicle of expression of joy and sorrow are not recognised. Even the animals express their inner feelings by bodily movements. The earliest cave paintings and sculptures provide ample evidence to the urge of man to dance. This urge gave rise to many forms of folk dances depending upon various customs and geographical situations, despite the great variations and multiplicity in forms and styles. In folk arts, folk dance has its uniqueness for overwhelming quality of spontaneity, of participation of every one, without any artificial barrier between

the performer and the audience. The intimate connection of folk arts with the daily life, be it hunting, fishing, sowing, harvesting or worship, links the people with one another.

Most important amongst the arts are music, dance poetry and literature. The melody of beautiful music charms people and even tames animals. The beauty of flower, the rhythm of a dance; the lyrical charm of a poem etc help to elevate the mind of man to heights of joy. Keats said, "A thing of beauty is joy for ever". The mother Aurobindo Ashram in Pondichery echoed, "Beauty, you are my way to divine". Traditionally several of the fine arts like music and dance have been associated with worship to emphasise the holy connection between art and divinity. The real purpose of art is to bring out the best in man which is the divine principal.

The folk forms have constantly been changing and in folk dances some techniques and rules were added and these took the forms of classical dance like Kathak, Manipuri, Odissi, Bharat Natyam, Kathakali and Kuchipudi.

Initially in India the dance was a way of worship and was therefore, performed in temples. But with the muslim influence, it shifted to courts as the muslim rulers had little understanding of Bhakti Rasa enshrined in dance as a mode of worship.

Guru Nanak composed his teachings in verses which were sung in different Ragas. He had in depth knowledge of the impact of arts on human mind and therefore was a great lover of fine arts. He travelled far and wide for preaching universal brotherhood in the company of Bhai Mardana who used to play Rabab while singing Guru's hymns in various melodies.

Kathak form of dance is a very ancient art of Northern India. Through this medium people used to be educated about various mythological stories and historical events.

In my thesis, I have dwelt upon Punjab folk dance, traditions as these are reflected in Guru Nanak Bani. The scheme of research on the above topic has been chapterised as follows :-

- I. Indian Traditions of Dance.
- II. Traditions of Folk Dance in Punjab -
Origin of Dance and Development.
- III. Types of Folk Dances in Punjab.
- IV. Guru Nanak's Attitude towards Dance
and Social Political Milieu of His Time.
- V. Instruments used in Guru Nanak's time.

A detailed bibliography has been included at the end of thesis.

CHAPTER I

INDIAN TRADITIONS OF DANCE

- (a) Types of Classical Dances in India -
Kathak, Bharat Natyam, Manipuri, Odissi, Kuchipudi.
- (b) Transformation of Folk Dance Into Classical Dance.

PART A

- 1.1.1 Man's Response to Nature.
- 1.1.2 Origin And Nomenclature of Kathak.
- 1.1.3 Origin And Nomenclature of Bharat Natyam.
- 1.1.4 Spreading of Aryan Civilization.
- 1.1.5 Origin And Legends of Manipuri Dance.
- 1.1.6 Raas Lila by Shiva and Parvati.
- 1.1.7 Thoibi and Khamba.
- 1.1.8 Odissi.
- 1.1.9 Source of Kuchipudi.
- 1.1.10 Bharat Natyam (Institution of Devadasi).
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- 1.1.13 Position of Temples and Other Attendants.
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PART A

I.1.1

Man's Response to Nature

Dance may be said to be an instinct or a compelling force to express emotions within. It is an outward expression of deep inner feelings. The man first danced from the sheer urge to express himself before he started to speak even.¹ Man responded and reacted demonstratively to all what he saw around him in nature that impressed him or affected him. The swaying of trees, the running and cascading of water, frisking of animals and other like phenomenon enthralled him. The emotional impulses that were generated found their gratification through the art of dancing. He has always utilized this medium to give vent to his inner feelings of joy, sorrow, anger, elation and trance - like bliss as well as his aesthetic emotions. Dance thus became one of the most cogent modes through which even the emotions or the ideas were conveyed. The dance is found amongst all men and women in the primitive as well as the advanced societies.² According to Projesh Banerji, "the primitive man was born with the quality or attitude of dance within him. Some reputed

1. Sangeet December 1959, P 14.

2. Sangeet November 1962, P 50.

thinkers establish that dance took its birth with the creation of universe much before man was born!"¹

I shall deal with five important dances of India, namely Kathak, Bharat Natyam, Manipuri, Odissi and Kuchipudi.

1.1.2 ORIGIN AND NOMENCLATURE OF KATHAK:

The word Kathak comes from the root Katha which means story telling. Kathaks were originally a caste of story tellers. They were attached to temples in certain parts of Northern India.² Historically Kathak dates back to vedic period when Rigveda, and epics of Ramayan and Mahabharata were written. Kathak communities used to go around the countryside narrating the stories of these epics and other legends. The modes employed were poetry, music and dance. All these three arts were closely inter-linked. The aim of Kathaks was to educate the people in the knowledge of Gods and mythological legends of Aryans.³ While reciting the epics and mythological stories, they also added the element of acting - abhinaya. In Ramayana, we find a mention of reciters who specialised in story telling.⁴ Lav and Kusha, the two brave sons of Rama rendered Ramayana in verses composed by Sage Valmiki.⁵

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1. Erotica in Indian Dance, P 12.
 2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 94.
Journal of Indian Musicology Society, Vol 10, No 3
and 4, Sept & Dec 1979, P 7 (article by S.K.Saxena).
 3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 125.
 4. Kathak Indian Classical Dance Art, P 1.
 5. Kathak Nritya Shiksha, P 26.

There is no historical proof about the origin of Kathak dance. However, if we look to Raas Lila of Brij, we can conclude that it is a contribution made by Lord Krishna.¹

Kathaks are mentioned in Kathasaritasagara (11th Century A.D.). It is said that King Sahasratika used to listen to tales narrated by Kathaka Sangataka. There is a reference to Kathaks in Natyashastra. The art was handed down from one generation to the other in a hereditary manner as an oral tradition.²

According to Mohan Khokar, "Kathak as a distinct mode of dance came in existence in 15th and 16th centuries with the emergence of cult of devotion through love (Prema-Bhagti), a form of operatic play known as Raas Lila, the traditions of which developed mostly in Brij, and the plays took their inspirations from the devotional poetries of poets like Surdas, Nandadas and Krishnadas. He says, "In time, the Raas Lila developed into a distinct form of folk theatre, carrying a pleasing blend of song, narrative acting and dancing. And the dancing in Raas Lila consisted for the most part, of an extension and amplification of the simple, basic mime and gesture of the Kathak story-

1. Sangeet, Feb 1958, P 2.

2. Kathak, Indian Classical Dance Art, P 2.

tellers combined with elements of whatever folk dancing was then available in the region".¹

1.1.3 ORIGIN AND NOMENCLATURE OF BHARAT NATYAM:

This is a form of dance prevalent in South India and the purest style of this dance is found in Tamil Districts. Like all other classical dances, it has its roots in Bharata's Natya Shastra.²

The expression Devadasi literally means God's attendant or devotee.³ In earlier times this dance was called Dasi Attam as it was performed by Devadasis in temples. The term 'Bharata Natyam' came in use in order to disassociate the art from Devadasis who had later fallen in disrepute. Some authors say that the term 'Bharata Natyam' means dance according to the principles of Bharata. However, this term could apply to any of the chief schools of classical dance in India as all these are based essentially upon Bharata's work.³

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 94.
 2. Bharata Natyam, Indian Classical Dance Art, P 13.
 3. The Science of Bharat Natyam, P 1.
 4. Indian Dances, Their History and Growth, P 31. Sangeet Bodh, P 170.

There are others who say that Bharata comes from three letters viz, Bha, Ra, Ta. The first word stands for Bhava, which is the inner feeling nourishing one or other of nine kinds of Rasas in dance. 'Ra' stands for Raga, melody and tune. 'Ta' means Tala, Time or rhythmic beatings.¹

Among the people of Mangalore district a story is prevalent that Arjuna was the first person to have taught Bharat Natyam type of dance. He taught this dance while in exile incognito as a woman under the name of Vrihannala to Uttara, the daughter of Virata, the King of Matsya Desha. This is the story in Mahabharata. It is possible that this type of dancing spread from Virata's court throughout Southern India and to Orissa.²

Another story is that Arjuna during his pilgrimage came to the city of Manipur. Chitrangada, the daughter of Chitrabhanu, the King of Manipur in Deccan was an artist. Arjuna married her and taught her the art of Bharata Natyam type of dancing and from her this type of dancing spread throughout the length and breadth of Deccan. Most probably Chitrangada was a devadasi or belonged to the same caste.³

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1. Art of Indian Dancing, P 97.
Classical Dances and Costumes of India, P 33.
 2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 95.
 3. Ibid, P 96.

1.1.4 SPREADING OF ARYAN CIVILIZATION:

Aryan civilization travelled from North to South. Indian civilization went as far as the Eastern Islands of Java, Sumatra and Borneo. It went from Gujarat and Bengal to Kalinga and from there to far East because Kalinga had number of parts in those days.¹

1.1.5 ORIGIN AND LEGENDS OF MANIPURI DANCE:

Manipur is the home of Meities, a race of slight built with slanting eyes, who are very sensitive and artistic. Here the dance and music are the focal point of every day life of the people. It is a spontaneous expression among the Meities.² Originally Meities were the followers of Bratya Religion, which was a Tantric Cult with an admixture of primitive concept of cosmology and worship of Shiva and Mother Goddess. Manipurites have a rich lore of legends and mythology. Most of these legends relate to Shiva.³ The people of Manipur trace their art to Gandharwas, the celestial musicians of Vedic mythology. Manipuri finds mention in Mahabharata. As mentioned on last page, the story is that Arjuna and Princess Chitrangada had a son named Babruvahan who ruled Manipur. The Rajas

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1. Art of Indian Dancing, P 110.
 2. Indian Culture Patterns and Processes, P 152.
Journal of Indian Musicology Society, Vol 4, No 3,
July-Sept 1973, P 23 (Article by Darshna Jhaveri).
 3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 171.

of Manipur claimed their royal decent to Babruvahan.¹ There is a general belief among the Manipurians that they are the descendants of Gandharvas and refer Manipur as 'Gandharvadesa' i.e. the land of Gandharvas. They substantiate this claim by quoting episodes from Hindu Scriptures. For example, Somara is a mountain peak on the Eastern Border of Manipur. Here according to Manipuri traditions, is a gate set by the Gods known as Mongpokhong. Tangkhus guard the gate. Tangkhus is the Meitie name for Tandu, the disciple of Shiva who taught dancing to Bharata, the author of Natya Shastra. Tangkhus, therefore, claim to be the descendants of Tandu. There is a mention in Mahabharata of a gate which is located on this peak.²

A passage in the Ramayan also makes a mention of this peak, where 'Usha', the Goddess of dawn made her first appearance. According to the legend, it was Parvati, who taught the dance to Usha and who in turn taught it to women of India. The women of Manipuri, therefore, regard themselves to be disciples of Usha. The black and white stripes in their costumes represent dark nights and the rays of dawn. The Chingkheiroi, one of the oldest Manipuri dances is a representation of Usha's dance.³

1. Dance Dialects of India, P 175.

2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 172.

3. Ibid, P 172.

1.1.6 RAAS LILA BY SHIVA AND PARVATI:

A very popular legend relates to Raas Lila dance performed by Shiva and Parvati. It is said that once Shiva and Parvati visited the earth and saw Krishna and Radha dancing the Raas. Parvati was so much enchanted with this dance that she longed to dance in the same manner with Shiva to enjoy the same kind of bliss. Shiva selected an ideal place for this purpose which was girdled by hills but was full of water. He pierced one of the hills and drained off the water leaving a splendid lush green valley. Here he danced with Parvati and this Raas went on for seven days and seven nights. The Gandharvas and various Gods provided the music and Nagdeva with Mani flooded the place with light. From that time this place came to be called Manipur (Mani means jewel and pur means place). Ritualistic dances dedicated to Shiva (Nong-Pokningthou) and Parvati (Pant-hoibi) have been composed by the people since those early days. One of the most famous dance drama is the Lai Haraoba which is based on Raas Lila of Shiva and Parvati.¹ Later the romantic and tragic story of immortal lovers Khamba and Thoibi, a Princess of Moirang Dynasty of Manipur as contained in Moirang Parba, a famous epic of Manipur, was incorporated in it.²

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 105.

2. The Dance in India, P 65.

1.1.7 THOIBI AND KHAMBA

The legend is, Thoibi, a Princess of Moirang dynasty, fell in love with Khamba, a poor but a brave young man. There was opposition to their being married. However, they married each other. After some time, Khamba said, that he was going out for a night and secretly left his spear in the house. The custom was that if a spear was left in the house of a woman and she kept it, it meant a secret liaison with a lover. Thoibi, noticing the spear, threw it out of the house. It struck Khamba who died of the injury sustained by it. Thoibi, then committed suicide by plunging the same spear in her heart. According to legend Thoibi and Khamba danced the role of Shiva and Parvati in the religious festival of Moirang.¹

The story of Thoibi and Khamba is described slightly differently by some authors. For example, in splendours of Indian dance it is recorded that Khamba in a playful mood in the night pushed his lance towards Thoibi to startle her. Suspecting that there was an intruder, she thrust it back. The lance hit Khamba who died on the spot. Thereafter she committed suicide with the same spear.²

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 105.

2. The Splendours of Indian Dance, P 67.

1.1.8 ODISSI:

The Natya Shastra of Bharat Muni which is said to have been written in 2nd century A.D. refers to four regional styles of classical dance. The Odra-Magadhya style is mentioned as the dance of the eastern region of India (Orissa and Bihar). Odrivisaya and Odradesa are the ancient names of Orissa.¹ Even today the classical dance of Orissa is known as Odra or Odissi dance. Since, Odra Magadha is referred to as an accepted dance form in Natya Shastra, it must have been in existence for some centuries before Natya Shastra was written.²

1.1.9 SOURCE OF KUCHIPUDI:

The classical dance as practised in Andhra Pradesh is known as Kuchipudi, and derives its name from the village Kuchelpuri or Kuchelapuram, a hamlet in Krishna District.³ Through the years this village came to be called Kuchipudi.⁴

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 123.
Indian Classical Dance, P 35.
 2. Dance Dialects of India, P 138.
 3. Art of Indian Dancing, P 103.
Sangeet September, 1962, P 27.
 4. Indian Dances their History and Growth, P 63.

Though springing from the comprehensive principles and techniques of the classical dance as expounded in Natya Shastra, this classical dance has come down to posterity in a highly developed dance drama form.¹

Three different types of dances were in vogue in Andhra Pradesh, each based on the classical modes and trends. These were the dances of Devadasis, the religious dance dramas of Yakshagana of Brahmins and the secular dances of Raj Nartakis. The dances of devadasis were devotional in character and were performed before the Shrine of Shiva on a polished stone slab, placed behind the Nandi bull which faced the Shrine. The dance dramas of religious Yakshagana performed by the Brahmins in temple mandapas took shape from the early indigenous dance, dramas called Bahu Natakas which portrayed the ten varieties of Shiva Leela Natayams or Shiva legends. These showed various manifestations of Lord Shiva, namely Garala Kantha (Shiva as the Saviour of the World who drinks poison to serve mankind). Mrutyam Jaya (Shiva as the destroyer of the God of Death), Tripura Samhara (Shiva who saves the three cities from Asuras), Satvika Ananda Rupa (Shiva depicting both man and woman who creates harmony and unity in the world process), Palonetra (Shiva as destroyer of Kama, the cupid of Hindu mythology), Aradhanari (Shiva as half-

1. The Dance in India, P 55.

man half-woman, signifying the dual process), Atavika Rupa (Shiva as hunter who tests Arjuna's strength and valour) Kala Bhairava Rupa (Shiva in His dance of anger, as He destroyed Daksha and His enemies), Naṭaraja (Shiva as the God who controls the harmony and rhythm of the universe) and Sandhya Nritya (Shiva in His gift-giving dance that calls to men to worship Him with peace in their hearts). Yakshagana dance dramas were enacted in the Kalyana Mandapa pavilions of Shiva temples. Lastly there were the secular dances performed by the professional woman dancers, Raj Nartakies, in the royal courts outside the temples.¹

1.1.10 BHARAT NATYAM (INSTITUTION OF DEVADASI):

It is not exactly known how the institution of Devadasis came into existence but it can be presumed that Devadasis were attached to the temples mainly in order to provide entertainment for the Lord. In this regard the earliest references are found in the Puranas. For example in Padma Purana which was compiled about 4th century A.D. it is written that one who offers a beautiful woman to God attains Heaven for one full Kalpa. Similarly in Skanda Purana which was compiled about 7th century A.D. Rishi Markandeya says "In the course of my supplications to Shiva as I offered oblations to fire, there came about seven beautiful maidens whom I employed in the service of Lord". In the history as well, we find references to the practice of dedicating dancing girls to temples.²

1. The Dance in India, P 56.

2. Indian Classical Dance, P 63-65.

1.1.11 DEVELOPMENT OF BHARATA NATYAM:

The development of Bharata Natyam can be traced to the Sangam age namely about 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. In this age two important epics namely Silappadikaram and Manimekhalai were written which deal with the life of dancing girls and say a good deal about the technique of the dance and its presentation. In the 12th century A.D. Adyarkunallar wrote a commentary on the Silappadikaram. In this references are made on earlier Tamil texts such as the Agattiyam, Jayantam, Gunanool, Bharatam and Isai Nanukam which deal with dance and music. It is significant that though the Natya Shastra too was written about this time, none of the Tamil works of the period make any reference to it. This probably means that in early stages the dance traditions developed in Tamil Nadu did so independently of Natya Shastra. Later it came to be influenced by Natya Shastra and other Sanskrit texts. The Aryan and Dravidian cultures merged harmoniously in the classical art form like Bharata Natyam.¹

1.1.12 PALLAVAS AND CHOLAS REGION:

Pallavas who ruled over Tamil Nadu from 4th to 9th century have no historical record to show that Devasasis were attached to temples in their time. However, the

1. Tradition of Indian Classical Dance, P 64.

existence of certain frescoes in Sittanavasal and carvings in the Pallava temples at Kanchipuram both of which show dance figures, lead to the conclusion that the art of dancing had reached a high degree of perfection by the time of Pallavas. Cholas were in power from the middle of 9th to late 12th century. We find positive evidence of the practice of the employment of devadasis in the temples during this period.¹

1.1.13 POSITION OF TEMPLES AND OTHER ATTENDANTS:

Temples were the centres of religion as well as art and culture. In earlier times devadasis had a high social status. They could sing, dance, read the classics and play musical instruments. These girls were of two categories - those who were voluntarily dedicated by their parents due to some religious sentiments and those who were dedicated due to some circumstances of stress. The devadasis started learning the art at the tender age of five. Tamil inscriptions show that about four hundred dancers were attached to Shiva temple of Tanjore in 11th century A.D. and about hundred to the temples of Kanchipuram.²

1. Tradition of Indian Classical Dance, P 65.

2. The Dance in India, P 29.

Through these dance dramas of the Bhagwata Mela, highly emotional and appealing stories were enacted.¹

1.1.16 CULT OF SHIVA:

After Kharewala, Kara or Bhaumas ruled Kalinga from 2nd to 7th Century A.D., Buddhism was the State religion. In the rock cut shrines we find the dancing figures of men and women. Suvakar Deva was the great monarch at that time in whose time art and culture of Orissa spread far and wide in India.²

Towards the end of Bhauma dynasty, cult of Shiva established in place of Buddhism. In Bharateswara, one of the early Shiva temples (6th Century A.D.), carvings depicting the marriage of Lord Shiva and figures of Celestial dancers are found.³

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1. Dance In India, P 30.
Sangeet June 1963, P 55.
 2. Dance Dialects of India, P 138.
Art of Indian Dancing, P 113.
 3. Dance Dialects of India, P 148.

1.1.17 KATHAK'S AS WORSHIPPERS:

In ancient period God was worshipped by the mode of expression. This was confined to Brahamins only, because they had the exclusive right of worship. The temple without the group of dancers and musicians was inconceivable. Temple sculptures of the North as well South tesify to this practice which must have been prevalent all over India. Brahmins were expert musicians and dancers attached to the temples. They were also excellent narrators and story tellers and used to interpret the incidents from Ramayana, Mahabarata and Puranas with gestures and music. The Sanskrit word Kathak or Kahika means a narrator or a story teller.

It is seen that dance poses shown on the sculptures of Mohenjodaro and Harappa are in Kathak form only. Kathak dance figures are also shown in paintings of 15th and 16th centuries.¹

1. Kathak Nritya (Hindi), P 26.

1.1.18 ODISSI FROM 9TH TO 11TH CENTURY:

Supremacy of Brahmanism took roots during the Kesari dynasty in 8th century. From 9th to 11th century Orissa enjoyed the Royal patronage in art and culture from the Kesari Kings. King Jayati Kesari built a Lingaraj temple at Bhubneshwar. The temples of Guteshwar, Brahmeswar and Parashurameshwar were also built during his reign. The outer walls of these temples at Bhubneshwar are replete with dancing figures of girls in various poses, which are a great store-house for dance artists for learning. In these temples there are innumerable figures of Natraja Shiva in 'Lalita Tandava' style, and also males and females taking part in dancing and musical performances, in solo, duets and groups. Queen Kalavati, the mother of King Udyata Kesari had built this temple of Lord Shiva in 8th century and employed dancing girls for service in the temple. These were known as Maharis in Orissa. Bhubneshwar became the center of Shiva cult and dancing hall was an essential feature of temple architecture.¹

1. Dance Dialects of India, P 141.
Art of Indian Dancing, P 113.

1.1.19 MAHARIS (TEMPLE DANCING GIRLS):

Temple dancing girls have been the earliest performers of the Odissi dance and for centuries they continued to be the chief repositories. The history of Odissi dancer, therefore, is largely the history of Maharis (Temple dancing girls).¹

1.1.20 GUTIPUAS (TEMPLE DANCING BOYS):

Besides the Maharis there were the Gutipuas or boy dancers who came to be attached to temples about 16th century A.D. They helped in protecting the temples, ensured regular performance of rituals in Jagannath temple of Puri and danced during religious and social functions.²

1.1.21 EXCHANGE OF DANCERS IN MANIPUR:

The Tai King, Kohlo-Feng of Burma, who invaded Manipur in 707 A.D. is said to have sent a troupe of dancers and musicians from Burma, Assam and Manipur to China, as a token of good-will.³ During the reign of King Loyamba, who ascended the throne in 1704 A.D., tragic love affair of Khamba and Thoibi took place. They are specially remembered for their dancing of the 'Lai Haroba', translated

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 124.

2. The Dance in India, P 50.

3. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 106.

as merry making of the Gods. They were such fine dancers that the Meities came to regard them incarnations of Shiva and Parvati, known as Nongpokningthou and Panthoibi in Manipur.¹ It is said that in 1467 A.D., during the reign of King Kyamba, King Pong of Burma took expert drummers and dancers from Manipur to his country.²

1.1.22 ROLE OF VAISHNAVITE MISSIONARIES:

In the 18th century Vaishnavite missionaries from Bengal went to Manipur and propagated a form of Hinduism which regarded Vishnu as the supreme deity and Bhagti (devotion) as a way to salvation. Vishnu was worshipped chiefly as Krishna (Ninth incarnation of Vishnu). It regarded Shravana (listening to praise of God) and Kirtan (singing of hymns - Bhajans) as forms of Bhagti. Music and art thus received a big boost through Vaishnavism.³

1.1.23 COMMUNITY SINGING COMMENDED BY GURU NANAK:

When all the participants in a Bhajan sing in union, sacred vibrations and Divine energies are released. When many sing together (named as kirtan), it acquires a Divine power. That was the reason why Guru Nanak commended community singing.⁴

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1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 173-74.
 2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 106-107.
 3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 174.
 4. Bhagwan Sri Satya Sai Baba's discourse delivered on 13th Feb, 1991 and printed in Sanathana Sarthi March 91 issue, P 64.

1.1.24 STATE'S ADOPTION OF VAISHNAVISM OF RAMANANDA ORDER:

Pamheiba, the king of Manipur under the influence of Goswami Santidas, a Vaishnav missionary gave up his Meithai Bratya religion and embraced Vaishnavism of Ramananda order and soon after, the entire state adopted this branch of Vaishnavism. Pamheiba, not only adopted Vaishnavism, but also got destroyed all records of previous religion and forbade the worship of Meithei images and use of Meithei language and script. The result was that Meithei traditions of dance and music suffered a severe set back and a whole range of Vaishnav dances emerged in Manipur.¹

1.1.25 ADOPTION OF GANDIYA VAISHNAVISM:

Bhagyachandra, the grandson of Pamheiba, ruled Manipur from 1764 A.D. to 1789. He is also known as Jai Singh of Karta Maharaj. He was a great devotee of Krishna. During his reign Parmanand Thakur along with other Vaishnav missionaries visited Manipur from Bengal. Bhagyachandra under the influence of Paramanand Thakur, who was a follower of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, adopted Gaudiya Vaishnavism as his religion. In course of time it became the religion of the State, completely replacing the Ramanandi faith. As a result of this, Bengali language got prominence over Manipur language, which affected Manipur dance as well,

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 107.

because songs of poets like Chaitanya, Jaideva, Chandidas and Vidyapati came to be used in this art.¹

1.1.26 COMPOSITION OF THREE VARIETIES OF RAAS:

Bhagyachandra, an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna was an artist and a scholar. He composed three varieties of Raas, namely Maha Raas, Vasant Raas and Kunj Raas. It is said that Lord Krishna appeared before him in a vision and revealed the Raas dance to him. Bhagyachandra also devised the Raas costumes which is known as Kumin and it was based on what he had seen in the vision.²

The first Raas Lila of Manipur was performed at Imphal in the Govindji Temple in 1769 A.D. and the part of Radha was played by Bhagyachandra's daughter Lairoibi, who is also called as Bimbavati or Bimbavatimanjuri.³

Bhagyachandra is also credited with the composition of Achouba Bhangi Pareng which is an indispensable part of all Raas dances.⁴ Later Maharaja Gambhir Singh (1825-1834 A.D.), was responsible for two parengs of Tandav variety, namely the Ghosta Vrindaban Pareng and Ghosta Bhangi Pareng. During the rule of Chandra Kirti Singh (1850-1886 A.D.), two more Parengs of Lasya variety were added. These were the Brindaban Pareng and Khurumba Pareng.

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 107.
 2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 175
Dance Dialects of India, P 175.
 3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 175.
Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 108.
 4. Ibid, P 108.
Dance Dialects of India, P 176.
The Dance in India, P 66.

Chander Kirti Singh also composed Raas dance, known as Naitana Raas besides sixty four other dances based on Manipur drum technique. The golden age of Manipur actually lasted for about a hundred years, i.e. from the rule of Bhagyachandra to that of Chandra Kirti Singh.¹

1.1.27 GANGA DYNASTY'S CONTRIBUTION IN ODISSI:

After Kesari Kings, Ganga dynasty came to power. Chodagangadeva who ruled from 1077 to 1147 was well versed in vedas and proficient in most fine arts. He built Jagannath temple at Puri which came to occupy a unique position in the cultural and religious life of the people of Orissa. He also employed Maharis for the service of this temple. After his death in 1194, Anangabhimadeva became the ruler. He constructed the Nata mandir or dance hall as an annexe to the temple for the performance of Maharis.² Ganga kings who ruled from 11th century to 15th century were devotees of Lord Vishnu and Lord Jagan Nath.³ Actually Jagannath is another epithet of the God Vishnu and means 'Lord of Universe'. It was during the reign of Chodagangdeva when Vaishnavism was in the process of being established in Orissa.⁴ References to dance rituals for the worship of Lord Jagannath are found in Sekanda. Purana is said to have been written in 10th or 11th century

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1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 177.
 2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 124.
The Splendours of Indian Dance, P 57.
 3. Dance Dialects of India, P 141.
 4. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 201.

A.D. ¹ During this period i.e. 11th century, Jayadeva, a saintly poet wrote Geet Govinda (songs of Govinda). This work portrays the mystic love of Radha and Krishna. Its astpadis became so popular that these used to be sung every day regularly for the worship of the God. According to an Oriya legend, Jaideva's wife Padmavati before her marriage expressed her desire to become Devadasi to serve Lord Jagannath. Temple dancers enjoyed a high status in society is proved by the fact that Queen Padmavati, wife of King Purushottam Deva of Solar dynasty received the Gopa sadhi award for her services as a dancer in Jagannath temple.²

King Purushottam Deva died in 1497 and his son Partsparudradeva succeeded him. He gave strict orders that only Geet Govinda shall be recited in Jagannath temple. In his time Vasishnavism as a religion became supreme and Bhakti cult received a boost. By the end of 16th century Orissa lost its independence and came, successively, under the rule of Bhois, Pathans, Moghuls, Marhatas and finally the British. From the time of Ramachandradeva i.e. about 1600 A.D. the Maharis came to be employed in Royal courts.³

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1. Dance Dialects of India, P 141.
Art of Indian Dancing, P 113.
 2. Dance Dialects of India, P 142.
Art of Indian Dancing, P 113.
 3. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 6 & P 125.

1.1.28 DANCES MENTIONED IN NRITTA RATNAVALI BY JAYAPPA NAYAK:

Nritta Ratnavali a valuable treatise in classical dancing written by Jayappa Nayak in the 13th century defines the classical Margi and popular desi dance forms which existed at that time. He also describes the ritual dances in the temples. Jaypadda was well versed in the theory and practice of the dance. The Kakatiya king, Ganpati Deva who ruled Andhra from Warangal, composed dances for Raja Nartakis of the royal court. ¹

1.1.29 FORMATION OF BRAHMANA MELAS:

When the order of Devadasis deteriorated, Brahmin gurus and experts of the dance assembled in Kuchipudi village and formed into groups in order to preserve the classical dance. They thus became the custodians of the classical dance in Andhra. They formed themselves into Brahmana Melas which consisted of men of highest character and integrity. The Brahmana Melas travelled from Kuchipudi village to other parts of the State entertaining the people with dance dramas based on the themes from Shiva Purana, the Ramayana and Mahabharata. ²

1.1.30 PROPOGATION OF KRISHNA CULT:

Later on, Bhakti movement made inroads in Andhra and Krishna Cult was propogated at the beginning of 14th

1. Dance Dialects of India, P 67.

2. The Dance in India, P 56.

century by Narahara Tirtha, a saint from Kalinga (Orissa), who brought dancers from Kalinga to sing and dance Geet Govinda. The poems, its musical modes and its language of gestures were taught to Raja nartakis at Srikakalam.¹

The Bhakti movement gave rise to an order of yogis who were of the firm belief that devotion of God when done through music was good but it was better if done through the combined art of music, dance and drama. Thus, they started a movement by which bhaktas began to approach God by singing, dancing and acting in His honour. The themes for this purpose were based on Bhagvata lore. Therefore, these artists came to be known as Bhagavatars in Tamil Nadu and Bhagavatulus in Andhra and their form of dramatic art came to be called Bhagavata Mela.²

1.1.31 CONTRIBUTION OF VIJANAGAR KINGS:

Art and culture reached its zenith in Andhra during the rule of Vijanagar kings. The earliest references in the history about Kuchipudi Bhagvathulu was made in 1502 A.D. in the MuchupalliKaifiat. It is said that people of Siddhavattam were suffering great hardships under the local tyrant Gurava Raju. Brahmna Bhagavathalus went to Vijayanagar and gave a performance of the play exposing the sufferings of people due to misrule of Gurava Raju

1. Dance Dialects of India, P 67.

2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 114.

before the king Vira Narasingha Raya and his queen, and the king took immediate measures to improve the situation.¹

1.1.32 MIGRATION OF BHAGAVATUALS TO TANJORE DISTRICT:

With the fall of Vijayanagar Empire in Andhra the art fell to evil days, and a sizeable number of Brahmins Bhagavatulus who were well versed in dance and music migrated to Tanjore District in Tamil Nadu where Nayak king gave them shelter. Achyutappa Nayak who ruled between 1561 and 1614 A.D. granted land to Brahmin families to encourage and develop the art of dance. The place where the colony was thus formed was named Achutapuram. Later this center came to be known as Melatur and retains this name even now. When these Bhagavatulus migrated to Tanjore, a number of secular professional dancers and Raja Nartakis also migrated there, bringing their art of music and dance with them.²

1.1.33 DISTINGUISHED COMPOSERS WHO MIGRATED TO TANJORE DISTRICT AND THEIR WORKS:

Amongst the distinguished composers and masters of music and lyrics who migrated to Tanjore district from Andhra were Bhakta Kshetranga and Bhakta Tirathanarayana. Yati-Kshetranga had composed Padams which brought him honour. When he migrated to Tanjore he took with him his compositions full of Rasas (flavour) which influenced the trend of classical dance there. Tirthanaryan Yati (1620-1700) became famous as the author of Krishna Leela, Tarangani was composed by him in Sanskrit between

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1. Art of Indian Dancing, P 104.
Indian Dances, **their History and Growth**, P 62.
 2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 104.

1680 and 1690 A.D. He composed number of dance dramas in Telugu. Well known among them are Parijataharanam and Rukman-gada. With the settling of Bhakta Tirthanarayana Yati in Tanjore District, the tradition of Bhagavata Mela, Nataka gained importance and he had many followers for years to come. ¹

1.1.34 NOTABLE SCHOLARS WHO DID NOT MIGRATE AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION:

Though some notable scholars and dancers migrated to Tanjore yet many remained in Andhra to stabilize the cultural art centre in Kuchipudi village. Amongst these the most notable was Bhakta Siddhandra Yogi who composed the Parijata Harana commonly known as Bhama Kalapam, in Sringara Raas, based on the dance drama by Tirthanarayana Yati and inspired by the theme of Sanskrit play Parijatam writtem by Umapathi of Bharhut in early 14th century A.D. ²

The story of Parijata Harana recounts how Satayabhama compels Krishna to get and plant the celestial Parijata tree in her garden after Krishna had given Rukmini a flower from such a tree. Krishna Lila Tarangini is the biography of Krishna beginning with his birth and ending with his marriage to Rukmini. ³

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1. The Dance in India, P 57.
Art of Indian Dancing, P 106.
 2. The Dance in India, P 57.
The Splendours of Indian Dance, P 75.
Journal of the Indian Mubicological Society, Vol 10,
No 3 & 4, Sept - Dec 1979, P 35 (Article by Gowri
Kuppaswami & M Hariharan).
 3. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 119-120.

Kuchipudi dancers of the Brahmana Melas were well versed in Natya Shastra of Bharata Muni, Abhinaya Darpan by Nandikeshwara and Nrittaratanavalli by Jayapa Senani among others. Therefore, they were able to draw upon all the fine points contained in these books. They also had high proficiency in Sanskrit and music, besides Telugu language. Their dance-dramas therefore had in them all three main elements of classical dance, namely Nritya, Nritta and Natya.¹

1.1.35 KATHAK'S REFERENCES IN OLD TEXTS:

The technical words such as tatkar, gat etc. used in Kathak are found in Sangita Darpan, Sangita Makaranda, and Kohal Rahasya which are old texts on music and dance. The poetries of Chandidas, Tulsidas, Meera, Vidyapati and Surdas incorporate dance-syllables known as boles. This indicates that dance was an essential part of such hymns.²

During the period of rise of Vaishnavism there were communities of artists like Dhandi, Natwa, Charan, Keertania, Rasadhari and Kathka who were proficient in dance, music and dance-drama. Some of them have kept alive the glorious traditions till date. Dancing blossomed under the patronage of Vaishnavism.³ Dhandis are Punjabi singers who play upon Dhand.⁴

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1. The Dance in India, P 58-59.
 2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 129.
 3. Kathak Dance Through Ages, P 13.
 4. Kathak, Indian Classical Dance Art, P 2.

1.1.36 GUPTA PERIOD:

During Gupta period the Sangeet occupied a prominent place in the society. The art of sculpture also made great strides and mostly sculptures depicted various dance poses.¹

1.1.37 MUSLIM INFLUENCE:

From the 8th century, India was subjected to Islamic influence and conceptions, first by the Arabs and then by the Turks Islam preached that all men were brothers under one God and there was only one path to heaven which lay through the teachings of the Prophets. It forbade making representations of living things. It adversely affected Kathak dancing which portrayed different Gods and Goddess in human form.²

1.1.38 SCHOOLS OF DANCE:

The dance was therefore taken from temples to courts with the advent of Muslim rule. It developed into two different schools, one represented by the Hindu courts of Rajasthan, particularly the court of Jaipur, and other by the Muslim Courts of Delhi, Agra and Lucknow.³

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1. Nritya Prashan Panjika, P 15 (Hindi).
 2. Sangeet March 1962, P 56.
Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 126-127.
 3. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 94.
Kathak Dance Through Ages, P 20.

1.1.39 NRITTA, NRITYA AND BHAVA:

In Rajasthan the nritta aspect of dance received much importance whereas Muslims patrons had no liking for technical virtuosity. They desired to see an art which depicted life in all its moods and passions. The result was that greater stress was laid on Nritya and Bhava. Thus it was transformed into a graceful, decorative, expressive, suggestive and sensuous dance.¹

1.1.40 PERVERSION OF DANCE:

The Muslim kings could not enjoy the Bhavas of Bakati-Rasa and therefore ordered the dancers to dance on the cheap songs. The dance thus became a cheap and base art for entertainment giving rise to perversion and remained confined to courts only.²

1.1.41 IMPORT OF DANCERS:

As Kathak was connected with religion, the early Muslim rulers regarded this form of dance as unsuitable for their patronage. They sent for musicians and dancers from Persia and Central India. These dancing girls were known as domnis and hourkinis. Each of them had their own distinctive style of dancing. The few Hindu dancers who found their way to the courts were influenced by the new styles.³

1.1.42 AKBAR'S CONTRIBUTION:

The period of emperor Akbar is marked by its enlightened

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 95.
 2. Nritya Prashan Panjika, P 14-15.
Prabhakar Prashanotry, P 31.
Sangeet, Feb 1969, P 18.
Kathak Nritya, P 28.
 3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 129.

approach to culture, when Kathak took a strong hold in the Mughal court, Akbar married, among others, a Rajput princess and encouraged Hindu music, dance and other fine arts. Kathak dancers achieved a high status under his patronage.¹

The Mughal emperors had refined taste which was reflected in their patronage to the artists of both music and dance.² Akbar's friend and adviser Abul Fazal wrote Ain-i-Akbari in Persian which describes Akbar's reign. It records the prevalence of dancing and music in his court. There was a dancer by name of Vallabh in Akbar's court. Kathak entered its golden era as Akbar respected dancers, musicians and poets.³

1.1.43 CONTRIBUTION BY NAWABS AND RAJAS:

Kathak received encouragement at the hands of Nawabs and Rajas. Many of them were very good dancers. The last Nawab of Oudh, Wajid Ali Shah, was an accomplished dancer and musician. He wrote poetry in Hindi as well as in Urdu. Although he was a Muslim he liked the Radha Krishna themes. He himself presented a dance on the Raas Lila which he called Rahas. He spent most of his riches on dance and music. When Wajid Ali Shah received a pension from the East Indian Company he spent that also on Kathak dance and music. He composed Thumaris in classical style and these were sung by Kathak dancers. A single line was expressed in different ways with

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1. Indian Cultural Patterns and Process, P 149, 151.
 2. Kathak, Indian Classical Dance Art, P 2.
 3. Kathak Darpan, P 164.
Kathak Indian Classical Dance Art, P 2.

hand gestures and facial expressions.¹ It was during his time that the Lucknow Gharana of Kathak dance came into existence. Prakash Ji, who was a famous dancer of Rajasthan was appointed the Court dancer by Nawab Asaf-ul-Daulah of Oudh and his son Thakur Prasad was a court dancer during the period of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. Thakur Prasad's two sons Bindadin and Kalika Prasad were also the court dancers and they introduced the expressional form of Kathak.²

1.1.44 BRITISH PERIOD AND DEGRADATION OF DANCE:

With the decline of the Mughal Empire and the rise of European power, Kathak fell in disgrace. The petty princes and the Britishers had little appreciation of fine arts like dance and so Kathak degenerated into sensual styles and there was tendency towards lecherousness. The performers became notorious as women of easy virtue.³ This corrupted form of Kathak was called 'Nautch' by the Europeans. This discouraged girls from respectable families from adopting dancing as a profession. However, Kathak continued to be taught to high caste Hindu girls in Rajasthan to seek good matches, as accomplishment in this art was taken to be an asset. They were given training at home and their attainments were confined for the pleasure of family.⁴

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1. Tradition of Indian Classical Dance, P 95.
Dance Dialects of India, P 167.
 2. Kathak Darpan, P 166.
 3. Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itihas, P 334-335.
Prabhakar Prashanotry, P 118-119.
Sangeet Oct 1957, P 11.
 4. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 131-132.

1.1.45 MANIPUR UNDER BRITISH RULE :

Manipur came under British rule in 1891, and thenceforth the dance was considered as immoral. This was a dark period for this art and it was able to survive in a few temples only, such as the temple of Govindji at Imphal. This state of affairs continued till the early part of this century when Ravindranath Tagore recognizing its potential included it in the curriculum in his Cultural Centre at Santiniketan. It was due to the interest of Tagore that this form of dance was first seen outside Manipur. This interest thereafter spread to other parts of country like Assam, Bombay, Ahmedabad etc. Jhaveri sisters are well known dancers of Manipur style. Dance institutions were also opened in Manipur which resulted in its revival.¹

1.1.46 KATHAK'S REVIVAL:

The first dancer to overcome the prejudices against the dance and its revival was Menaka. She was the daughter of Pyare Lal Roy who was a rich zimindar and a practicing barrister at the Calcutta High Court. She was married to Capt. Sahib Singh Sokey who was later Knighted and promoted to the rank of Major General. She learnt Kathak under the guidance of able gurus and gave her first public performance in Bombay in 1928.² She formed a residential school of dancing

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 178-179.

2. Kathak Dance Through Ages, P 97.

at Khandala in 1938,¹ however Projesh Banerji dates it as 1942. Pandit Jawahar Lal was one of its patrons. During the World War II, this school was closed in 1944. Because of her aristocratic Brahmin birth and social high standing, she was responsible to remove inhibitions and stigma which was attached to dance. She gave performances in principle cities of India and abroad. In Calcutta, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was so much impressed that he came on the stage and blessed her for the revival of India's great dance art traditions. Even Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore sent some persons from Santiniketan to study under her.²

After India gained independence in 1947, the art of dancing received great encouragement and number of institutions to promote this art were opened. To name a few of these are, Sangeet Natak Academy and Kathak Kendra at Delhi.

1.1.47 REVIVAL OF ODISSI:

Odissi did not escape a decline any more than the other dances of India, but the old Gurus with the help of state patronage helped in its revival. To name a few leading ones, they are Kelu Charan Mahapatra, Pankaj Charan and Deba Prasad Das. Indrani Rehman is the first contemporary professional dancer to have studied Odissi seriously and

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1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 132.
 2. Kathak Dance Through Ages, P 96-98.

given performances in various parts of India. The other dancers of repute are Priyambada Mohanty, Pratima Das, Ritha Devi, Yamni Krishnamurthi, Kum Kum Das and Sanjukta Misra.¹

Examination of Orissan manuscripts on dance illustrates the existence of a distinct regional style. However these also demonstrate that in principle the local style by and large, follows Natyashastra, namely the classification into Tandava and Lasya and the division of the dance into Nritya, Nritya and Natya.

The most notable manuscript is Abhinayachandrika of Mahesvara Mahapatra which gives detailed description of various movements of hands, feet, standing postures and dancing repertoire. Other manuscripts which deserve mention are Sangita Narayana Nritya Khanda by Narayan Dev Gajapati of the 15th century, Nritya Kaumudi and Natya Manorama by Raghunath Rath and finally the Abhinaya darpana of Jadunath Sinha of the 17th century. The study of these manuscripts gives the idea of the prevalence and popularity of the Odissi dance during these centuries.²

Creative literature also inspired the Odissi dancers and provided themes for the dances. Besides the Geet Govinda, a glorious work of Jayadeva, the writings of the Gajapati Emperor Kapilendra, the songs of Upendrabhaj and lyrics composed by various writers of Bhakti cult, like Kavi Surya

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1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 203.
 2. Indian Classical Dance, P 35.

Baldev Rath, Gopal Krishna Patnaik and Banamali Das were also popular, and were source of inspiration for the composers of Odissi dance till early 20th century.¹

1. Indian Classical Dance, P 36.

PART B : TECHNIQUES OF DANCESKATHAK1.2.1 GANESH VANDANA:

Kathak recital usually begins with Ganesh Vandana. Ganesh represents good luck and remover of all obstacles. But now sometime invocation of Goddess Saraswati or that of Shiva is also done at the beginning of the dance.

1.2.2 THATT, AMAD, SALAMI, TORA, TUKRA ETC:

Vandana is followed by Thatt.¹ It is a decorative and graceful gesture. The neck glides subtly from side to side in tune with Tal. In this the dancer moves neck, eyes, eyebrows, wrists, hands and shoulders in consonance with rhythm.² Next comes Amad. This is a type of Uthan in Kathak. In Kathak dance Amad has different types of group of Bols, which are depicted on both sides of the body in the same manner. Amad corresponds to the Allarippu of Bharat Natyam.³ After Amad, the dancer performs Salami, Tora, Tukra, Paran, Chakkardar Paran, Pramlu, Gat Nikas, Gat Bhava and Tatkar.

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1. Swinging Syllables Aesthetics Kathak Dance, P 14.
 2. Kathak Nritya Shiksha, Part I, P 76.
Sangeet March 1962, P 57.
 3. Kathak Darpan, P 178.
Kathak Nritya Shiksha, Part I, P 78-79.

1.2.3 GAT BHAVA:

Gat Bhava is the art of story telling in expressive mime (Bhava) in dance. Radha-Krishna legends are the usual themes. The religious themes of mimetic dance describe the activities of various deities. In tandava style, Siva Tandava, Kalika Tandava, Sandhya Tandava and Kaliya Mardana are the typical themes.¹

1.2.4 COSTUMES DURING MUGHAL PERIOD:

During the Mughal period, the dress in the court was of Persian style and the Court dancers also adopted the dress of the same style. However, in the last few years of Akbar's reign there was a change. The men wore a jacket, and women choli with half sleeves. Both women and men wore churidar pajama. Over these they wore shirts made of stiff material. They also wore over their shoulders a scarf of silk or muslin known as dupatta. The head dress consisted of a turban. In Jehangir times, it consisted of chust Pajama over which was worn angarakha. The women wore embroidered waist coat of satin and a gossamer orhni. The soft flowing bell shaped skirt was of full length. The palms and feet were dyed with henna.²

1.2.5 PRESENT HINDU COSTUMES OF WOMEN:

Kathak dancers now have a lot of freedom in the choice of costumes. Broadly speaking these are Hindu or Muslim inspired. Among the Hindu costumes which is generally used

1. Dance Dialects of India, P 171.

2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 130.

by women is the 'Ghaagra and Orhni'. Ghaagra is long with a broad gold or silver border. The Choli which is worn has embroidered sleeve-bands. The Orhni which is draped over the head and left shoulder is interwoven with gold patterns. Bracelets, armlets, necklaces, heavy ear rings are worn as articles of jewellery, besides a jewelled 'Tikka' which is suspended in the middle of forehead. An ornate girdle or belt is also used.¹ Anklebells are tied on feet. These are used by all the Kathakas throughout their recital.²

1.2.6 PRESENT HINDU COSTUMES OF MEN:

The Hindu costume for men consists of a silk dhoti with brocade border. It is tied around the waist and between the legs. A silk cloth is also tied round the waist. The upper part of the body is left naked. Sometime a jacket with short sleeves is also worn. Gilt necklace with stones is worn as a part of jewellery.³

1.2 7 PRESENT MUSLIM COSTUMES:

The Muslim costume is the same as it was in Jehangir's time except that the skirt of the Angarkha is of calf length. The ear rings are plain and golden. A necklace of pearls of two rows may be worn. A Jhumar is worn on head.⁴

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1. Indian Dances, their History & Growth, P 136-137.
 2. Aesthetical Essays, P 191.
 3. Indian Dances, their History & Growth, P 137.
 4. Ibid, P 138.

1.2.8 INSTRUMENTS:

The instruments used in Kathak are Tabala, Sarangi, Pakhawaj and Harmonium. These days Sitar, Dilruba and Volin are also used.

1.2.9 THE LAI HARAoba DANCE DRAMA OF MANIPUR:

The traditional dances of Manipur, Lai Haraoba is the oldest.¹ It means invocation and providing pleasure for the Gods.² It can also be termed as 'The festival of Gods'.³ It is a ritualistic dance drama performed in the month of May lasting for 10 days. It portrays the invocations to the Gods, the creation of man, birth, youth, adult life and marriage.⁴ Though it is performed in the whole of Manipur Valley, yet the main venue is the village of Moirang.⁵ This dance drama contains Nritta (Pure dance sequence) and abhinaya with explicit hand gestures, songs and musical accompaniment. The musical instrument which is played throughout the dance is Pena a single-stringed instrument played with a bow.⁶

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 108.
 2. The Dance in India, P 65.
Sangeet, Dec 1958, P 23.
 3. Indian Dance, their History and Growth, P 184.
 4. The Dance in India, P 66
 5. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 108.
 6. Ibid, P 109.

Lai Haraoba being a ritualist dance, is directed by high priest (Maiba) and high priestess (Maibi). They are the persons who have dedicated themselves to the service of God and art of dancing.¹ This dance is performed in several stages. In the first instance, Maibi places flowers on the water of a nearby stream, which means the summoning of deities. These flowers are brought to the village in a procession and scattered. Maibi then prepares a seat in the centre of the stage by placing a cloth on a plantain leaf. She then worships Indra and moves anti-clockwise to the four corners of the stage, offering prayers to the deities. The second part of the dance is Lai Pou. It starts with the chanting of the words 'Hoirori' and 'Hoya', seven times in seven different notes. Lai Pou portrays by using appropriate gestures, the birth of God, building of a temple to house him and making garments for him. The dancer describes the development of child in the womb and then its birth. For the building of a temple the details regarding gathering of sticks, laying of foundation and thatching of the roof are shown by appropriate mudras. The growing and picking of cotton, spinning and making of garments therefrom are also exhibited in the dance. Thereafter there are love duets enacting the parts of Nongpokningthou and Panthoibi, who are believed to be the reincarnation of Shiva and Parvati.

1. The Dance in India, P 66.

The last stage consists of dance performed for the pleasure of Gods which include the depiction of various sports, fishing and hunting. Thereafter the villagers bid farewell to the deities by placing them in the boat and sending them down stream. The dancers wear white costumes. The arms are covered with long-sleeved blouses. A flower is worn behind one ear. The ornaments are less elaborate than used in Kumil.¹

The most beautiful part of the Lai Haraoba festival is the performance of Moirang Parva. This is the tragic story of Khamba and Thoibi which is performed in duets by the dancers. The Lai Haraoba dance drama contains both lasya and Tandava types of dancing.² The dance is set to a love song. The female dancers wear phanek with red, pink and black stripes and a flowered border at the bottom. The velvet blouse is of emerald green colour and is embroidered in gold and silver. The hair are set loose and a red band with gold fillers is tied round the head. The man who portrays the part of Khamba, wears a purple and gold dhoti and a velvet jacket of green colour with gold trimmings. Head dress consists of a white turban with red and gold embroidery and decorated with a peacock plume.³

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1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 184-186.
 2. The Dance in India, P 66.
 3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 186.

1.2.10 RAAS LILA:

Generally there are seven types of Raas. Five varieties of Raas namely Meha Raas, Vasanta Raas, Kunj Raas, Nitya Raas and Dija Raas are of lasya type. All these relate to the stories of Krishna and Gopies. The other two viz, Ghosta Raas and Ulukhal Raas are of Tandav Type which exhibit the stories of Krishna and Gopas. In these it is shown how Krishna looked after the cows, played with gopas. Killing of demons is also portrayed.¹

1.2.11 SANKEERTAN:

Another important dance of Manipur is Sankeertan. Sankeertan means community prayer. In Manipur it is not done through singing only, but through dancing as well. This dance is performed by men only. It is of two types. One is Poong Cholom which is performed with a drum and the other Khartal Cholom which is performed with cymbals. The Manipur Sankeertan is performed on religious occasions, weddings or birth of a son.² The movements of this dance are forceful and vigorous of Tandav style. The basic position in both the dances is the same but the drum dance has a number of vigorous and acrobatic movements, whereas in cymbal dance there are subtle, dignified and graceful body movements.³

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1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 187.
 2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 112.
 3. Journal of Indian Musicology Society incorporating Sangeet Kala Vihar English Supplement, Vol 2, No No 3, July-Sept, 1971, P 6.

BHARAT NATYAM1.2.12 ALLARIPU

This is the first Charan of Bharata Natyam. The dancer starts the dance with her feet together, body leaning slightly forward and palms joined above her head. This is an invocational section in which greetings are offered to the diety and to the audience. The word Allaripu is derived from the Telugu word 'Alarimpu' which means to decorate with flowers. Some of the movements do suggest that the dancer scatters flowers in honour of the diety on the stage. But the use of the word may be purely figurative as the dance also shows the gradual flowering or opening out of the dancer's body in readiness for the recital which follows. As the music begins, the dancer glides her neck in subtle movement from side to side. The eyes of the dancer follow the neck in a triangular movement-up, right, left, and back to normal. This is done a few times and after this repetition the shoulders and hands join the movement of the eyes and neck. Throughout Allaripu, there is no accompanying song. The only vocal accompaniment used is in the form of dance syllables known as Sollakuttus. The speciality of this dance is that every action on the right is also mirrored on the left.¹

1. Indian Dance, their History and Growth, P 42-44.
Bhartiya Nritya Kala, P 13.

1.2.13 JATISWARAM:

After Allaripu comes Jatiswaram. Jatiswaram is an item of pure dance (Nritta). In this there is no song or expression. In place of sound syllables there are musical notes or particular ragas and talas. It produces a kind of aesthetic pleasure "the meaning of pure dance is this - with the God given body and limbs you create as many forms of beauty as possible in poses and movements in rhythm".¹

1.2.14 SHABDAM:

In this the theme may be devotional, erotic love or a narrative episode from the lives of Gods. Bhava is given importance. The singer sings the song with rhythm and the dancer depicts the various bhavas with facial expressions and graceful postures. There is a combination of Nritt and Natya.²

1.2.15 VARNAM:

Varnam is the most difficult and elaborate item of Bharat Natyam. This brings out the best in pure dance.³ In this the music is of high order with exquisite dance patterns of great variety.

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1. Bharat Natyam Indian Classical Dance Art, P 84.
 2. Bharat Ke Shashtra Nritya, P 4.
 3. Bharat Natyam Indian Classical Dance Art, P 85.
Dance Dramas of India and the East, P 10.

1.2.16 PADAM:

Padam is a love lyric which covers every aspect of love, mystic and divine. The padas are in Tamil, Telugu or Sanskrit. There is an exposition of Abhinaya for a number of Padams. The Padams of Kshetranya and the Ashtapadies of Jaideva are the best suited for Abhinaya. The emphasis in a Padam is on the words of the poem and in order to allow the fullest interpretation through Abhinaya, the movement of the dance is slow. ¹

1.2.17 TILLANA:

The term Tillana in Karnatic music of the South is synonymous to Tarana, a form of song in Hindustani music of Northern India. Tarana in course of time came to be absorbed in Karnatic music and is now known as Tillana. This pattern was incorporated as a dance form in Bharat Natyam programme by four late masters of the Ponniah Pillai family, who taught it to their descendants. The dancer performs rhythmic variations. ²

It is joyous fantasy of pure dance, the most graceful and lyrical of all styles of Bharat Natyam. The 'words' of the song comprise rhythm syllables continuously repeated by the singer. The dance is an elaboration of the basic rhythm syllables in beautiful poses and foot work. Fine flexions of neck, breast and waist, elusive play of bewitching glances and slow and rapid movements provide a brilliant

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1. The Dance in India, P 43.
Kathak Darpan, P 199.
 2. Classical Dances and Costumes of India, P 63.
Bharat Ke Shastrya Nirtya, P 5

summary of dance artistry.¹

1.2.18 SLOKAM:

Slokam is the final number in Bharat Natyam. This is an expressional number. The slokas are generally in Sanskrit but sometimes these are also drawn from Geet Gobinda of Jai Deva. To give a full play to abhinaya, the dancer stops the foot work and expresses bhavas by facial expressions and movements of hands.²

ODISSI

1.2.19 TECHNIQUE:

Odissi draws upon several ancient texts, most important of which are Natya Shastra, the Abhinaya Darpan and the Abhinaya Chandrika. Odissi bases its pure dance technique on Karanas of the classical treatises which are the alphabet of all dance movements. Karnas are known in Odissi as Sthanaks. Based on Karnas, the experts have evolved what are known as Belis of fundamental bodily positions combined with dance movements and Bhangis which are the principal dance positions.³

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1. Dance Dialects of India, P 57-58. 542410
 2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 50.
 3. The Dances in India, P 51.



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There are eight belis or basic body positions and movements each of which has many varieties. The various sitting positions are called baithas. Uthas are the positions used in rising and jumping either on one foot or both feet. Sthanka is the act of standing still on the flat of feet with the feet together or apart, or on the toes, or on the heels with one foot flat and the other resting on toes. Chalis are the gaits and walks, various directions of the steps and fast circular movements with hands and arms. The quick movements, burbas, suggest joy and excitement. Bhasa is the alternate bending of body from left to right. The spins executed on the spot are called Bhaunris and retreating movements done at the end of each sequence of dance is called Pali. The stretched foot resting on the heel and dancing on heels is a marked mode of the Odissi.¹

Bhangis add more distinctive technical touches to the Belis, such as the curve of the hips with head inclined and legs bent at the knees. In the Odissi style of dance emphasis is given to bending the hips. Odissi dancing treats the body in terms of three changes along which deflections of the head, torso and hips can take place. In Hindu plastic art, there are actually four bends of body for beauty of line and posture. The four bends are same bhanga (equal bend with hardly

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 203.
The Dance in India, P 51.
Bharat Ke Shastriya Nritya (Hindi), P 35-36.

any noticeable bend to any one side); Abhanga (the state of slightly bending the body to either side); Atibhang (exaggerated bend); and Tribhanga (the Triple bend in which there is emphasis on deflecting of the hips. Trobhanga is very common in Odissi dance. The Atibhanga is also found in many sequence of Odissi dances.¹

1.2.20 PERFORMANCE OF INSTRUMENTS:

In Odissi performance the dancer uses a balanced combination of nritta and nritya. Though the style is lasya yet there are some elements of tandav in it.²

The instruments used now are Mardal, a drum, the gini (cymbals) and a flute. Voilin or Veena is also added some times. In the former times the dancer used to sing herself but now a singer is usually included among the musicians.³

The entrance of the dancer on the stage is known as Patra Parbash which is the beginning of the dance. The performance opens with Bhumi Pranam which is invocation to mother earth and salutation (Jagarana Nritya).

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1. The Dance in India, P 51-52.
Indian Classical Dance, P 36.
Artical by Khushwant Singh in the Tribune dated 11th May 1991, Saturday Plus, P 1.
 2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 205.
 3. Ibid, P 205.

It is introductory and invocatory, the dancer commonly standing still in Sthai bhangi with hands clasped and feet close together in a manner that the big toe of the right foot rests on that of the left. Trishanga poses then follow, and vandana commences. To the chant-like recitation of the word syllables and drum sounds the dancer touches the ground with hands inclining forward in an act of obeisance and then retreats and salutes the Guru. Thereafter the dancer performs Vighnaraj Puja. It is the invocation addressed to Ganesh. Sanskrit sloka is recited and interpreted by the dancer rhythmically. Vighnaraj Puja is followed by Batu Nritya. It portrays the worship of Lord Shiva. This is also known as Batunata. In this item the dancer shows the techniques of pure dance incorporated in the Belis, Bhangis and Karnas as well as the art of interpretation accompanied by complicated patterns of rhythmic word syllables. Movements combine both Tandava and Lasya modes. Various modes of prayer offerings like offering of flowers, incense, light, food and salutations are shown in it. The dedication of Lord Shiva is followed by Ishta Deva Bandana. At this stage the dancer worships her chosen God or Goddess. A sloka in Sanskrit or Oriya poetry which is chanted is interpreted through bhavas by the dancer and many facets of the

particular deity are presented through movements and gestures. Next comes the Swara Pallavi Nritta in which stress is laid on both music and rhythm. A melody of a chosen Raga is sung which the dancer illustrates through movements. The swara Pallavi is pure nritta with an emphasis on hand gestures (hast-abhinaya) during the singing of alap. The dancer sets the mood by using decorative poses and eye movements. After this the dancer interprets the musical notations of the raga in movements. It is followed by Abhinaya Nritya which is also called Geeta Abhinaya. In this the dancer interprets a romantic poem usually on Radha-Krishna theme emphasising the Sringar Rasa (Love Mood) or a lyrical verse from Geet. Gobinda denoting the worship of God through love and devotion (Bhakti) may be interpreted. Compositions of other well known poets like Upenderbhaj or Banmali Das are also sung and interpreted by the dancer. Each couplet of the poem is punctuated with Nritta which becomes progressively more intricate and enters the last stage known as Tarijham or Natangi. It is in fact a continuation of the previous stage and is pure dance showing statuesque postures, swift movements of arms, the tilt of head, jerks of neck and fine patterned feet rhythms set to rhythmic patterned playing of the drum syllables. The bols are sung.

The dance reaches a climax and ends with Tihai done three times. However, now many compositions have been added to nritta and abhinaya portions and final number is often the Moksha nirtya.¹

KUCHIPUDI

1.2.21 NRITTA:

Nritta contains the items of pure dance comprising foot work and movements of limbs. These items are generally used as decorative pieces and have no bearing on the theme of the play. In this group are included pieces such as the Puja Nritya, Jatiswaram, Tillana and Kannakole. Puja Nritya is a dance of invocation performed at the beginning of a concert. The Jatiswaram and Tillana are similar to such items as in Bharata Natyam. The Kannakole is an item composed mainly of footwork.²

1.2.22 NRITYA:

The Nritya part has items such as Sabdams, Slokams and Padams. The Nritya items also like Nritta numbers may be added to dance drama for adornment or rendered

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1. Indian Classical Dance, P 38-39.
Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 205-206.
The Dances in India, P 52-54.
Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 128-129.
Dance Dialects of India, P 138-157.
 2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 118.

as independent numbers. Sabdams are poetic compositions in praise of a chosen deity. The most popular Sabdams are the Krishna, the Manduka and the Dasavtara. Krishna Sabdam portrays the Nayike waiting for Krishna to come. It is from the play Usha Parinayam. Manduka Sabdam is the story of a female frog who emerges from the pond as a beautiful woman-Mandotri - who is taken away by Ravana to Lanka as his queen. Dasavtara unfolds the sequence of ten incarnations of Vishnu. There is no Kuchipudi dance-drama which does not feature Sabdam. A special variety of Sabdam which is peculiar to Kuchipudi dance is Abhishekams. In these, story of a God right from his birth to coronation is depicted.¹

The Slokams, like Sabdams are pieces of abhinaya or expressions rendered solo. Since the important thing in Slokam is its expression, generally the Slokams are performed in a sitting position. A favourite type of Slokam is the one which has the theme of Vipralambha Sringara i.e. depictions of pangs of separations of the loved one.²

1.2.23 PERFORMANCE. A typical programme of Kuchipudi is as follows :-

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 119.
 2. Ibid, P 119.

- (i) Puja Nritya. This is a dance of invocation.
- (ii) Jatiswaram. This is a sequence of pure dance in which skilful timing, rhythm and speed are characteristic of head, arm and foot movements.
- (iii) Tillana. It is a very attractive dance piece to a fine melody performed diligently in which expressions, gestures and rhythm combined with speed exhibit the great technical skill of the dancer.
- (iv) Kannakole. In this musicians and dancers combine in fast rhythm with exciting foot work.
- (v) Krishna Sabdam. This depicts a story of love for Krishna.
- (vi) Manduka Sabdam. This dance portrays the story of a frog which transforms into a beautiful princess Mandodri and is taken away by Ravana to Lanka as his queen.
- (vii) Dasavatara Sabdam. It depicts the ten incarnations of Vishnu including the coming of Maitreya who is yet to come to save the mankind.
- (viii) Bhama Kalapam. It is the story of celestial Parijata tree during which Sacred Flower Dance is performed.¹

1. Classical Dances and Costumes of India, P 29-31.

I have dwelt upon these five classical dances prevalent in India to indicate that these dances have always been imbued with religious fervour and were part of human activity and all classical dances developed from folk dances which were connected with every day life. Music had also been an integral part of all dances including folk dance. Music had also been an inspirational element in Baba Nanak's life. It was inseparably engrained in his compositions which is evident from the fact that his all hymns were composed in various ragas.

Classical dances have number of common elements with folk dances, some of which according to Pani Grahi Director Kathak Kendra, New Delhi whom I interviewed are as follows :-

1. Both classical and folk dance have rhythm.
2. Both of these have elements of expression.
3. Both the dances have Rasa.

PART C : TRANSFORMATION OF FOLK-DANCE TO CLASSICAL

1.3.1 DEFINITION OF FOLK DANCE:

Dance amongst the arts is the most primitive and sophisticated vehicle of expression of joy and sorrow. Folk according to Oxford dictionary means a people; nation; race; people in general.¹ Generally people have a wrong notion as to the word 'folk', and say that folk-art is village art. Since folk means people in general - common people - both living in rural and urban areas, therefore folk-art is the common man's art. Folk-dance, therefore, means a dance of people. It is characterised by the quality of spontaneity and of participation of everyone without any barrier between the performer and the audience.² The folk-art may not be very sophisticated and so refined as to be included in that of classical, but it has its own rules, rigidity, beauty, richness and grandeur.

1.3.2 PRIMITIVE DANCE:

In a community of lower culture there is primitive dancing. It is only done for pleasure sake to depict the inner feelings. It is not done to entertain people. It is a spontaneous rhythmic expression at some festival or ritual. It is inborn and not learnt from any teacher. With the development of civilization folk-dance came into

1. The Concise Oxford Dictionary.

2. Traditions of Indian Folk-Dance by Kapila Vatsyan,
P 1.

existence. It takes its birth from the primitive-dance and is a refined shape of primitive dance. The emotions expressed in the folk dance are original and natural whereas in refined dance these tend to be artificial.

1.3.3 IMPORTANCE OF FOLK DANCE:

Progress of civilisation brings changes in art and culture. Folk-dance in India developed amongst the peasantry, because majority of people (more than 85%) belonged to rural areas. Thus it came to be termed as an art of village folk, though it may not be accurately correct as all the people whether rural or urban contributed to its development. It is of great national importance. Washington Irving remarked that the character of a people is often to be learnt from their amusements, for in the hour of mirth, the mind is unrestrained and takes its natural bent.¹ Folk dancing of a nation is the nation's mirror as it reflects nation's temperament, art, culture, social and political status.

1.3.4 CULTURAL AND CIVILIZATION:

In order to know about the aesthetics of Indian folk dances, it is essential to know the cultural background of the Indian folks which provides beauty to their folk dances. Literature, music, painting, dance, philosophy, religion etc., all these combine together in one word 'culture'.

1. The art of Indian Dancing, P 7.

Culture is the internal condition of an individual of which civilization is the external expression. Both these mean refinement. In Hindustani, culture means Sanskriti, and civilization means Sabhyata. Folk dance only is not an integral part of Indian culture and civilization, but folk art as a whole has given birth and is the originator of Indian culture and civilization.¹

It is essential to have civilization and culture in our daily life as only then a perfect understanding of the friendship between nations and people can be developed. Without culture there can be no true civilization because it will be like a house without foundation. To find the real culture it is necessary to study the rural rustic people as they constitute the bulk of population.

1.3.5 IMPACT OF RELIGION:

Religion had a great impact on folk dances in India. It was the most prominent and forceful impulse to the rural peasantry to engage them in this religio-artistic pursuit. This is the reason that the folk dance-art of India is an art of masses and is not an aristocratic art of bourgeois class. Stories and legends from the epics, the Mahabharata, Ramayana, the Puranas, the folk-lore, folk-legends and tales of Gods and Goddesses have given inspiration to the villagers since ages and they have

1. Aesthetics of Indian Folk Dance, P 31.

formulated their dances with that religious background. The folk dances of South are generally based on Shiva. Bengal and Assam being the worshippers of female-aspect of Shiva Shakti have folk dances influenced by Kali and Durga cult. The folk dances of Northern India have been influenced by Radha-Krishna episodes. Ganapati, and Goddess Lakshmi have influenced the folk dances of Maharashtra Gujarat and Saurashtra.¹

1.3.6 CLASSIFICATION:

There are various kinds of dances and these differ in various classes or tribes. They are broadly classified according to clans, such as boatman's, fisherman's, milkman's dance. So in India dance depends not on technique but on the tribes practising the art. Generally a dance goes by the name of the tribe and its type of vocation although there are exceptions to this general classification just as virile Bhangra dance of the Punjab can be classified in the martial group.²

Folk dances in India can roughly be divided into three broad classes viz Men's dances, Women's dances, and mixed dances. These dances may further be divided into three main categories: (1) Social - These are semi-religious and connected with seasonal festivals, (2) Purely religious and (3) Martial or heroic. It may, all the same be added

1. Aesthetics of Indian Folk Dance, P 38.

2. Ibid, P 44.

that it would be very difficult to draw a clear cut line between social and ceremonial dances or seasonal and ceremonial dances. It is a matter of common knowledge that a serious ritual in one generation may become merely an adult amusement of the next. Similarly most of the dances which were originally seasonal or ceremonial have become a source of periodic diversion and show.¹ Taken together we find in all parts of India four levels of performances, (i) Performance reflecting man's response to natural environment (ii) his response to the social structure, (iii) at other times functional occupation and (iv) to the consecration of the moment of the change of season through ritual performances.²

1.3.7 TRANSFORMATION:

Characteristic in the folk dance of India is that there was interchange and interconnection of prevalent folk dances. On religious occasions and ceremonies, fairs used to be held in the temples or near these and invariably folk dances used to be performed. Naturally folk dances influenced the dance art of dancers whose art was purely religious to appease the deity. Dances gradually became much refined, polished and sophisticated and in time gave birth to classical dance. In this way the dance art of Bharat Natyam owes its origin from the dances of devadasis

1. Aesthetics of Indian Folk Dance, P 35.

2. Traditions of Indian Folk Dance, P 372.

in South and Odissi of Orissa from the Maharis, who are the devadasis of that state. Similarly in North India too major part of the dances were enacted near temples or performed on religious occasions such as Bharat Milap, Ram Lila and other festivals. The existence of devadasis institution in Northern India though may seem some what strange to layman yet devadasis played an important role not only in Southern India but in every part of our country. The system of devadasis in Hindu temples was officially abolished by legislation in Tamil Nadu but there was no necessity to pass such legislation in North because devadasis institution died long ago when the country went in Muslim hands. It can be said that most of the refined and classical forms of dance in India were preserved in their pure forms by temple dancers. Virtually the development of tribal dancing into folk dancing and folk dancing into classical forms and then degeneration of that again into ruder forms is an endless cycle.¹

"Folk dance provides enormous succour to the dance expressions of the classical forms in the present day of improvisation and extempore compositions, musical phrases and dance pieces as well as modern ballet themes based on "free style" of dancing."

writes Projesh Banerji.²

1. Aesthetics of Indian Folk Dance, P 40-41.

2. Ibid., P 48.

During the pre-independence period, the dancers and dancing parties of rural areas received patronage from the Zamindars, Jagirdars, Chiefs and Nawabs. During Muslim period these artists received Royal patronage. This patronage contributed a good deal towards the sophistication of folk-art expressions by the classical forms of urban areas. With growth and development from feudal agrarian society to modern industrial civilization, the basic expressions, movements and time beats of folk dance gradually found their way to urban areas from villages. Songs from folk-tunes, many thumri and Dadra tunes, Kajri, etc., even a number of Khayal tunes, time beats of four, commonly known as Kaharwa tal, based on rhythmic steps of the Kahars (Palanquin bearers) are the best examples to support this. Thus classical types of cultures had their origin from temples and field culture, and became an admixture of court and temple-cum-field culture with great intricacy of design and perfection.¹ Also, all classical styles in India have evolved from strict adherence to a particular pose or stance where the body achieves an abstraction of a totally different order. The ardhmandali of Bharatanatyam, the rectangular open position of Kathakali, the tribhanga and chauk of odissi, the figure of eight of Manipuri are the examples in this regard. Further there are differences in the movements, both in abstract and in mime positions. It would also be logical to accept

1. Aesthetics of Indian Folk Dance, P 48-49.

the view that in India it would always be possible for a tribal folk form to achieve excellence through the introduction of a literary theme set to a musical mode and by attempting to relate the word and the sound to specific movements while retaining all the characteristic, mannerism of folk style.¹

To sum up, it would be incorrect to consider folk dance as uncivilised, but it should be understood as the form of expression of simpler agrarian civilisation built on fundamental emotions. The range of psychology behind folk-dance covers almost the whole gamut of human feelings and emotions. In folk-dance forms there are more truthful and direct elements than the classical which is loaded with artificiality. It is, therefore, natural that folk-dance expressions supply abundant raw material for use in the contemporary period whereas classical dance tends to go into blind alleys of formalism. Folk traditions are more near to reality and more truthful to emotions and feelings of people than classical which has the element of outward polishing. Therefore folk-dance is an easier means of communication between man and has a mass appeal than the classical dance.²

1. Traditions of Indian Folk Dance, P 375.

2. Aesthetics of Indian Folk Dance, P 49.

I have given a resume of various types of classical dances prevalent in India because the dance has been the most ancient medium of representing collective gaiety which has been handed down from posterity. Guru Nanak, who had deep insight of human nature could never be averse to this natural and noble impulse of mankind which is involuntarily exhibited through the movements of human body. In the next chapter I will deal with mythological, religious and historical aspects of dance.

CHAPTER II

TRADITIONS OF FOLK DANCE IN PUNJAB
ORIGIN OF DANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

- (a) Mythological.
- (b) Religious.
- (c) Historical.

PART AMYTHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

- 2.1.1 Creation of Natya Veda
- 2.1.2 Staging of First Drama by Bharata.
- 2.1.3 Demons Displeasure.
- 2.1.4 Object of Dance and Art Creation.
- 2.1.5 Shiva's Dance.
- 2.1.6 Consort's of Shiva.
- 2.1.7 Shiva's Anand Tandav at Tillai.
- 2.1.8 Shiva's Dance Competition at Tillai.
- 2.1.9 Three Aspects of Shiva's Dance.
- 2.1.10 First Aspect of Shiva's Dance.
- 2.1.11 Second Aspect of Shiva's Dance.
- 2.1.12 Third Aspect of Shiva's Dance.
- 2.1.13 Kali's Dance.
- 2.1.14 Vishnu.
- 2.1.15 Krishna.
- 2.1.16 Krishna's Tandav Dance (Kaliya Mardana and Kalia Daman).
- 2.1.17 Nayak - Nayikā Bhava - Krishna Lilas.
- 2.1.18 The Maha Raas or Raas Lila or Raas Mandal.
- 2.1.19 Distinction Between Vaishnaism and Shaivism.
- 2.1.20 Dances of Apsaras.

PART BRELIGIOUS ASPECTS

- 2.2.1 What is Religion?
- 2.2.2 Art and Spirituality.

- 2.2.3 Dance Vis-A-Vis Divinity.
- 2.2.4 Spiritual Trends in Dance and Music.
- 2.2.5 Difying the Forces of Nature.
- 2.2.6 Western Oriental and Guru Nanak's Concept of Creation.
- 2.2.7 Guru Nanak on Creation.
- 2.2.8 Indian Dance's Spiritual Power.
- 2.2.9 Reference to Dance in Puranas.
- 2.2.10 Qualities and Qualifications of a Dancer.
- 2.2.11 Influence of Dance on Other Arts.

PART C

HISTORICAL ASPECTS

- 2.3.1 Existence of Dance and It's Growth in Society.
- 2.3.2 Contribution of Natya Shastra to Dance.
- 2.3.3 Contribution of Puranas and Other Treatises.
- 2.3.4 Dance in Classical Literature from Ist to 5th Century.
- 2.3.5 Sudraka, Other Authorities and Darvidians.
- 2.3.6 Purpose of Dance.
- 2 3.7 Patronage by Kashmir Rulers and Slave Dynasty.
- 2.3.8 Early Centuries in South and Maratha Rule.
- 2.3.9 Impact of Dance on Other Fine Arts.
- 2.3.10 Main Categories of Dance Forms.
- 2.3.11 Nanak's Concept of Dance Gurus.
- 2.3.12 Effect of Shift in Religious Emphasis.

PART 'A' : MYTHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

2.1.1 CREATION OF NATYA-VEDA:

The origin of Indian dance is associated with number of mythological episodes. It is said that at the end of Golden age and beginning of Silver-age, moral values and ideals and attitudes underwent a change for the worst. People became listless and dissatisfied. They discovered that there was such a thing as boredom. What was the state of people was equally true for gods. Because of perpetual inactivity, gods were in despair. They thought that they must do something to get rid of this boredom. They approached Brahma, the Creator, for help and requested him to devise some amusement to pass time which should be all embracing i.e. it should enchant both the eyes and the ears and should be suitable to all including the low castes.

Brahma distilled the essence from all the four Vedas. From Rig Veda he derived the words, from Sam Veda he extracted the music, from Yajur Veda, the code of gestures and from Atharva Veda, the flavour. He blended these ingredients into a harmonious whole and created the art of theatre and gave it the name of Nritya. The book dealing with this art came to be known as 'Natyā-Veda'.

2.1.2 STAGING OF FIRST DRAMA BY BHARATA:

Brahma had simply created a technique and its worth could only be proved by putting it into practice. The

gods, used to leisurely ways, were not willing to shoulder this responsibility. Brahma asked god Indra to teach it to other gods and give a performance in consonance with these principles. Indra replied that gods would neither understand it nor interpret it skillfully. He suggested that sages would be more suited for this task. Brahma then taught this Veda to Bharata and asked him to prepare a drama. Bharata with his 100 sons set himself to work. Brahma directed that graceful style should also be included in the play. This was not possible if the play was to be enacted by males only. Brahma, therefore created twenty three Apsaras to be employed in the play. The drama was staged under Indra's banner before the audience of gods and demons. The story of the drama was the fight between gods and demons in which gods came out victorious. This hurt the feelings of demons.

2.1.3 DEMONS DISPLEASURE:

In the book Indian Dances by Rina Singha and Reginald Massy, the result of hurt feelings of the demons is described as follows :-

"The gods were extremely pleased and rewarded the players with many gifts. However certain demons who had sneaked in, took offence at the dramatization of their defeat and saw to it that the actors lost their memories, power of speech and movements. Indra divined what had happened and taking up the finest banner staff, battered all the demons to death. He then gave this staff, or

Jarjara, to the players for their protection but other demons came and continued to harass the actors until Brahma advised Bharata to build a playhouse. This done, its various parts were protected by different deities. All the actors and actresses too were given patron deities to protect them. Brahma himself protected the middle of the stage and this is why flowers are symbolically scattered on it at the beginning of every performance

Brahma also tried to reason with the demons and spoke to them saying that they were not the only ones to be shown to disadvantage in drama but that drama would show all manners of people, gods as well as demons, in every condition 'There is no wise maxim, no learning, no art or craft, no device, no action that is not found in the drama'. It would instruct as well as entertain. Every man would find in it some relevance to himself.¹

2.1.4 OBJECT OF DANCE AND ART CREATION:

The art of dance and drama was created to instil a virtuous code of conduct and uplift the finer values of life. This fact finds support from Sloka 8-11, Chapter I of the Natya Shastra wherein it is written that Indra and other gods approached Brahma and requested him to give people a toy (Kridaniyaka) which could not only be seen but also heard to provide a diversion so that people gave up their evil ways.²

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 20-21.

2. Introduction to Bharat's Natya Shastra, P 3.

The purpose of the Natya Shastra was the attainment of four purushart or objects of human pursuits namely Dharma (spiritual and ethical development), Artha (acquiring of wealth), Karma (conjugal life and pleasure of environment) and Moksha (Salvation).¹ It is said that after demons were molified by Brahma the latter suggested to Bharata that it should be performed before Lord Shiva for his guidance. After elaborate preparations, two plays namely Amrita Manthan (Churning of the Ocean) and Tripura Daha (Burning of three Abodes) were staged to be witnessed by Lord Shiva who was mighty pleased with the performance. While congratulating Brahma, Shiva suggested the incorporation of his dance. On Brahma's request Shiva directed his disciple Tandu to teach the dance. Tandu taught Shiva's dance (Tandava) to Bharata.² Parvati also instructed him in her style (Lasya). It is also said that Parvati also taught her style to Usha, the daughter of demon Vanasur.

From Tandu, Bharat Muni learnt the basic foundation of dance comprising 108 Karanas, the thirty two Angaharas, the four Rechakas and the various Pindi Bhandas. All this basic dance technique has been described by Bharata in Tandav Lok Shana, the fourth chapter of Natya Shastra.³

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1. Nritanjali (An Introduction to Hindu Dance), P 34.
 2. Indian Dance, P 5.
Abhinaya Prakasika, P 2.
 3. The Dance in India, P 3.

2.1.5 SHIVA'S DANCE :

Nataraja means the king of actors and dancers. In Uttar Pradesh Shiva is known as a Yogi and Philosopher, in Bengal as Destroyer and in South India as Natraja.¹

Shiva dance is known as Tandav. It is said that Lord Shiva performed 108 types of dances but in Saivite literature one finds details of sixty four only, which the Lord performed at 64 different shrines. It is commonly accepted that except seven dances all other dances of Shiva are merely varying interpretations of the basic Tandav. These are (1) Anand Tandav or dance of joy and bliss, (2) Sandhya Tandav is the evening dance, (3) Kaliṅka Tandav is the slaying of demons of evil and ignorance. (4) Tripura Tandav is the slaying of demon Tripura. (5) Sanghar Tandav is the dance of destruction. These are solo dances. There are two other dances of Shiva which are not solo but are with his consort Parvati. These are (6) Tandav dance with Gori which is called Gori Tandav and (7) Uma Tandav-dance with Uma.² Six of these Tandavas elaborate the main aspects of Shiva while the Anand Tandav portrays manifold responsibilities of Lord Shiva. For example, in Anand Tandav or the dance of bliss, the hand holding Damaru or rattle drum stands for the creative force the hand shown as flat palm with extended fingers

1. Art of Indian Dancing P 9.

2. Ibid, P 9.

gives assurance of protection to his devotees; the hand holding the fire signifies destruction or fire sacrifice; the foot planted on the subdued dwarf symbolises the removal of ignorance and illusion and stamping down evil that binds the soul; upraised foot signifies emancipation of soul from the cycle of rebirth and that he showers grace on those who seek it, the fourth hand pointing to the raised foot tells the path of salvation, and a beautiful refuge to those who seek His love and grace.¹

2.1.6 CONSORTS OF SHIVA

The gods have their twin aspects in Hindu mythology. Their active principal or energy being considered feminine and called consort (Shakti). The consorts of Shiva takes many forms and represents many diverse qualities, Well known amongst these names are Sati, Uma,, Parvati, Meenakshi, Durga and Kali.² According to legend, Sati was the daughter of Daksha, the spiritual son of Brahma. Her father did not invite Shiva to a sacred ceremony. She could not bear the insult and caste herself into the sacrificial fire and perished. When Lord Shiva came to know of it, he appeared on the scene and putting Daksha and other adversaries to plight, picked up Sati in his arms and danced seven times around the world. The movements expressing his grief were so forceful that the whole world trembled. To save the world from the catastrophic results of Shiva's power, Vishnu severed the sati's body into pieces and

1. Sangeet, March 1960. P 98.

2. The Dance in India, P 7, 10 and 12.

in this way released Shiva from his rage and the gods prayed to Shiva to be calm . Shiva returned to Mount Kailash and became engrossed in deep meditation. Sati was reborn as Uma, the daughter of Himavan (Himalaya). She is also known as Parvati, who again became the consort of Lord Shiva. She danced and sang divinely. According to legend, Uma's meditation and austerities for many ages won her Lord Shiva's admiration and compelled him to accept her as consort. This exemplifies that to achieve the final goal of becoming one with the God, one has to pursue the path of love and devotion, giving up the ego.¹

2.1.7 SHIVA'S ANAND TANDAV AT TILLAI:

Shiva's most significant dance, Anand Tandav is said to have been performed at Tillai, the ancient name of Chidambaram, to chasten the rishis at Tillai who were teaching the people doctrines. Among those who saw Shiva's dance was Adi Shesha, the thousand hooded serpent, on whom Vishnu reclines. He was so much entranced by the performance that he prayed to Lord Shiva to allow him to see it again. Lord Shiva directed Adi Shesha to remain at Tillai till he visited again. Adi Shesha transformed himself into the shape of half snake and half man and practised austerities for thousands of years in company of Vyaghrapada, a devotee of Lord Shiva, before he saw Lord Shiva dance again. It is said that Adi Shesha, came to be known as Patanjali.²

1. The Dance in India, P 10 and 12.

2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 16-17.

2.1.8 SHIVA'S DANCE COMPETITION AT TILLAI:

There is another legend about Lord Shiva's second visit to Tillai. It is said that at that time, there were two shrines, one of Shiva and the other of goddess Kali, his counterpart. Shiva travelled to Tillai to grant benediction to Patanjali and Vyaghrapada, but Kali refused admission. To settle the dispute, Lord Shiva proposed to Kali to compete with him in dance and that the loser would leave the town. Shiva performed many dances which Kali imitated with absolute perfection. He then contrived to defeat her in another way. He raised his foot to the level of his crown and continued to dance in that pose. Feminine modesty of Kali did not permit her to take up that pose and she withdrew from the contest.¹

2.1.9 THREE ASPECTS OF SHIVA'S DANCE:

Shiva represents that aspect of God who creates good (true knowledge) and destroys ignorance. He is the source of cosmic harmony and rhythm. There are three aspects of his dance (1) The destructive (2) The yogic (3) The gift giving.

2.1.10 FIRST ASPECT OF SHIVA'S DANCE:

This is Tandava Tamsic aspect of Bhairava. He dances this awe-inspiring dance on the cremation grounds. He dances as a destroyer and destroys the illusion which binds the soul to the fleeting world. The cremation ground

1. The Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 16-17.
Dance Drama of India and the East, P 4.

is symbolic of hearts made pure by burning away of all illusions, ignorance and deeds, and with the removal of ego, the soul gets liberated. He is the ten armed Lord, denoting great power.¹

2.1.11 SECOND ASPECT OF SHIVA'S DANCE :

This is his divine yogic evening dance performed on Mount Kailash, the hermitage of Shiva. It is described as follows in Shiva Prodosha Stotra; "Placing the mother of three worlds upon the golden throne, studded with precious gems, Shulapani dances on the heights of Kailasha and all the gods gather around him. Saraswati plays on Vina, Indra on the flute, Brahma holds the time marking cymbals, Lakshmi begins a song, Vishnu plays on drum and all the gods stand around.

Gandharvas, Yakshas, Patagas, Gragas, Siddhas, Sadhyas, Vidyadharas, Amaras, Apsaras assemble there to witness the celestial dance and hear the music of divine choir at the hour of twilight.

This is known as Shiva's Sandhya Nritya which is grace-giving dance granting spiritual bliss to those who seek to realize him.²

2.1.12 THIRD ASPECT OF SHIVA'S DANCE

This is a gift giving dance which was performed by Lord Shiva to chasten the Rishis who had faltered and ultimately acknowledged Shiva as their Lord.

1. The Dance in India, P 6.

2. Ibid, P 6

Shiva in this dance, is the dual personality of god and goddess, the gracious entity with powerful nobleness. He is the source of all life and movement with his divine flaming arch that vibrates. He will destroy all evil, freeing the souls of mankind from the illusion that keep him tied to earth.¹

Mohan Khokar in his book Traditions of Indian Classical Dance interprets the Dance of Shiva as under :-

"For one who can perceive deeper, the Anand Tandav attitude of Shiva is fraught with yet more recondite symbolism, as far instance, is seen in explaining the damaru. It suggests vibrations, vital vibrations which constitute the first step in the evolution of universe as also the birth of sound-primal sound on which all music and languages of the universe are based. Some images show Shiva with flying locks of hair studded with stars - the set pattern of rhythm of the cosmos. While two eyes of Shiva represent the two eyes of the world, namely, the sun and the moon, his third eye, in the centre of the forehead, stands for latent fire; together Shiva's three eyes are also taken to indicate the past, present, and future integrated into the infinite span of Time. The serpents adorning various parts of his body suggest the diverse forces he has tamed and harnessed. The wearing of man's ear rings on one side and a woman's on the other implies that he embodies in his form both male and female energies. The Ganga sprouting from his streaming tresses gives affirmation for his deathlessness. And Shiva's dance on the ugly writhing dwarf signifies the complete defeat of evil in

¹ The Dance in India, P 6.

the world.

Interpreted metaphysically, the Dance of Shiva is not a random or an occasional affair; it is an eternal phenomenon. The Dance of Shiva sustains the universe and imparts order and purpose to its activity. The ever-enduring cycle of creation, continuance, and dissolution stems from the Dance of Shiva and survives because of it. Indeed it has been said of the iconographic representation of the Dancing Shiva that this is the clearest image of the activity of God which any art or religion can best boast of. To the discerning Hindu, the Nataraja concept of Shiva truly stands for a whole philosophy of life."¹

Shiva's gift giving dance represents his five activities (Pancakriyta), viz Shristi (over looking creation and evolution), Sthite (preservation), Samhara (destruction, evolution), Tirobhava (veiling, embodiment, illusion and also giving rest), and Anugraha (release, salvation, grace). These separately considered, are the activities of the deities Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheshvra and Sada Shiva.²

2.1.13 KALI'S DANCE:

Shiva's consort Kali is also said to have danced, the most prominent one being Urdhava, which she performed with Shiva by way of competition, to decide who was the better dancer. She is said to be dancing on cremation grounds.

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 18.

2. The Dance of Shiva P 87

The philosophical and religious symbolism about dancing on cremation grounds by Kali has been described lucidly by Sir John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon) in Garland of Letters Madras 1922 and quoted by Enakshi Bhavnani in the book The Dances in India, thus :-

"Kali is set in such a scene for she is that aspect of great power which draws all things into Herself at and by dissolution of the universe. He alone worships without fear who has abandoned all worldly desires and seeks reunion with her as the one blissful and perfect experience. On the burning ground all worldly desires are burned away. She is naked and dark like a threatening rain-cloud, for she who is Herself beyond mind and speech reduces all living things into that worldly 'nothingness' which, as the void (Shunya) of all we know, is at the same time the All (Purna) which is Light and Peace. She is naked, being clothed in space alone (Diagambara), because Great Power is unlimited; further She is Herself beyond Maya (Mayatita); that power of Herself with which She covered Her own nature and so creates all universes. She stands upon the corpse like (Shavarupa) body of Shiva. He is white,, because He is the illuminating (Prakesha), transcendental aspect of Consciousness. He is inert because the changeless aspect of the Supreme, and She apparently Changing aspect of the same. In truth She and He are one and the

same, being twin aspects of the One who is Chang-
less and exists as Change, Clothed in Infinite
Space.¹

2.1.14 VISHNU

In the Hindu Trinity in importance next to Shiva is Vishnu, however he has no importance as a dancer. The only way in which he is associated with dancing is that he witnessed Shiva's dance and played the cymbals when Shiva danced.

2.1.15 KRISHNA

According to Hindu religion Vishnu has come to earth in many incarnations (Avtaras) and the 8th incarnation being Krishna. He was born of royal blood but grew up amongst simple pastoral people of Bindraban in Gokula. He played with Gopas (Cowherds) and Gopis (milkmaids). His boyhood is full of many stories of naughty deeds and playful pranks which he is said to have performed.

Krishna is the man God who loved and delighted in things which make men happy. He danced both alone and with others. Shiva is serious and Krishna is full of pathos and love. Krishna is known as Natwar whereas Shiva is known as Natraja.²

1. The Dance in India, P 8.

2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 14.

Though Sri Krishna danced on many occasions the details of which are found in many ancient books, three important dance themes will explain the philosophical truths reflected in them.

2.1.16 KRISHNA'S TANDAV DANCE (KALIYA MARDAN AND KALIA DAMAN):

When Krishna as a boy was living in Gokula with his foster parents Nanda and Yashoda, the serpent known as Kalia, a hundred headed monster lived in river Yamuna. The serpent had become a menace for herdsmen of the village. One day when Krishna alongwith his gopas was playing with a ball, it fell in the river, which was abode of Kalya. Krishna jumped into the river to retrieve the ball. Kalya resented the intrusion and the result was a fierce combat. Krishna leapt from one head of the monster to the other and subjugated him. To rejoice the victory, Krishna climbed on the hood of Kalya and danced. In this dance Krishna symbolised that aspect of God who destroys evil and protects the innocent and the right.¹

2 1.17 NAYAKA - NAYIKA BHAVA - KRISHNA LILAS:

These are dances in which Radha, the beloved of Krishna takes part. These dances represent the yearning of the individual soul to merge with the universal soul. Prema is lasting Bhakti (devotion) and is a sure path to achieve this end. Man's heart is the

1. Tradition of Indian Classical Dance, P 18-19
Sri Shuk Sudha Sagar, P 808-812.

place of sacrifice. All his deeds and thoughts are renderings offered as sacrifice. It is a dance of giving up ego and imbibing love and devotion for the God.¹

In Bengal Lord Krishna is always depicted in dancing poses with divine flute in his hand Bengali devotees of Radha and Krishna went singing to different parts of India and spread the Krishna cult. The Vaishnavas of Bengal make Radha and Krishna dance. They also dance while singing devotional and love songs of Krishna and Radha. Poets like Vidyapati, Chandidas, Jayadeva and Mirabai sang Krishna's unforgettable adulations with ecstasy.²

2.1.18 THE MAHA RAAS OR RAAS LILA OR RAAS MANDALA:

This is the ardent dance of love which Krishna used to perform with Gopis (milkmaids) of Bindraban. Several ancient Sanskrit texts contain references to this mystic sport of Lord Krishna, the most important being found in tenth book of the Bhagavat Purana. In this, Vyasa devotes five chapters on the description of this dance.³

This dance has a deep philosophical meaning. Gopis represent the countless souls in search of over-soul. Their love is not for that which is seen, but for that which is not seen. All their affections are

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1. The Dance in India, P 9
 2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 13.
 3. Sri Shuk-Sudha Sagar, P 872-873.

directed towards the supreme love viz God. Gopies give their all to Him willingly without expectation of any reward. This signifies the manner in which one should love God. The playing of flute and consequent gathering of Gopies symbolises the fact that nothing can stand in the way of those who sincerely love God. The multiplication of Krishna while doing the Raas signifies that God comes to each and every devotee whosoever craves for Him.¹

The great exponent of Vaishnava cult, Shri Chaitanya always conceived Radha and Krishna merged into one in his own heart and himself felt the pleasure and pain which Radha felt due to love and separation of Krishna.²

2.1.19 DISTINCTION BETWEEN VAISHNAISM AND SHAIIVISM:

A fine distinction can be made between the two cults viz, Vaishnaism and Shaivism. In Krishna cult the love is brought into prominence and it is regarded as the path of devotion. In it emotion, particularly Shringar Rasa is predominant. In Shaivism there is supremacy of intellect. Shiva represents the supremacy of intellect over the heart and Krishna that of heart over the head. Shiva is adored in the temple but Krishna appears as a Sakha (friend) to his devotees or a lover or a child according to the form of devotion.³

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 20
The Dance in India, P 9.
The Shuk-Sudha Sagar, P 855-857.
 2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 15.
 3. Ibid, P 14.

2.1.20 DANCES OF APSARAS:

Apsaras are the celestial fairies or heavenly nymphs who danced in the court of Indra - the Vedic Lord of heaven. The most famous among them are Menaka and Urvashi. Menaka's reference also comes in "Shankuntla", the drama written by Kalidas, who was sent to disturb the meditation of sage Vishwamittra. In the epic of Mahabharata too, reference is made of Arjuna having learnt the art of dance from the court of Indra and teaching it to Uttra, the daughter of king Virat during his exile incognito.

To sum up, the birth of dance in Hindu mythology is bound with the ever pulsating rhythm of heavens. It is the gods, goddesses and an untold number of other characters in this mythology who continue to be remembered in the dance, that women and men on earth have exulted in as entertainment carrying it to the height of a glorious performing art.¹

1. The Splendours of Indian Dance P 17.

PART B : RELIGIOUS ASPECT2.2.1 WHAT IS RELIGION ?:

The literal meaning of the latin word religion is to unite with God. According to Oxford dictionary, religion is practice of sacred rites or prevalent system of faith and worship. It is human recognition of super human controlling power, especially of a personal God entitled to obedience. Religion essentially is the means of making man search for the soul or God within him. It has the goal of self realizations which is possible only by inculcating spirituality. Religion is the means and all different rituals and modes of worship are aimed at realizing the divine consciousness in man.

Guru Nanak's religion was the religion of love and service.. At Page 790 of S.G.G.S. in Rag Suhi, Baba Nanak says that one who has not known love is like a guest visiting an empty house and departs disappointedly.¹

2.2.2 ART AND SPIRITUALITY:

Art is beauty and beauty is art "all Sundaram (beauty) must lead man to Sathyam (truth) and Sathyam to Shivam or bliss (which is auspiciousness itself)" says Sri Satya Sai Baba.²

1. S.G.G.S, P 790.

2. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 191.

There are 64 Arts (Kalas) of which the more prominent ones are painting, dancing, music, poetry and literature. Art is related to spirituality. Leonardo-de-Vinci said that art of painting is related to God Himself, since painting is the grand daughter of nature.¹

The dance in India with its history of more than three hundred years grew and was nurtured in temples. This has given dance it's distinctive religious quality.²

2.2.3 DANCE VIS-A-VIS DIVINITY:

Traditionally several fine arts like classical music and classical dance have been associated with temple worship making a holy connection between art and divinity. Goddess Saraswathi is depicted as holding a Veena in her hand to symplise the link between music and God. Similarly Lord Shiva is shown in a dancing pose to link the dance with God. The power of music and dance as prayer has been experienced by artists. There are cited incidences in the history of music where the rain was brought about through the power of music. The real purpose of art is to bring out the best in man which is the divine principle. Real art is that art which brings out the Atmatattya or the essence of the soul.

1. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 191.

2. Creations, P 20.

2.2.4 SPIRITUAL TRENDS IN DANCE AND MUSIC:

In India the spiritual trend in music and dance has all along been present since times immemorial. In the ancient books of Hindus, the Vedas, dance is referred to in Rigveda, Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda and Puranas. It was always performed in rituals and sacred ceremonies. In the ceremonies of horse sacrifices, a ritualistic dance accompanied by sacred songs was performed by young girls.

There is a Vedic pronouncement to the fact that a daughter must be first married to Soma, then to Gandharva and only then to Agni. It means that she should first be taught to brew Soma Rasa, then to dance and sing, and having learnt these arts only then she should be given in marriage.¹

Saintly men in their unbounded love for the God sought liberation (Moksha) and became one with the universal soul through music and dance. The devotional songs were known as Kirtans and then when collectively sung these were called Sankirtan. Sacred hymns were also chanted in various Ragas. Melodies in praise of God were composed and sung to win His grace. The famous ones are of Jayadeva, the Tringas of Narayana Tirtha and the devotional compositions of Meera Bai, Gopal Krishna, Bharti, Tukaram, Tulsidas, Kabir and Baba Guru Nanak.

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 23.

2.2.5 DEIFYING THE FORCES OF NATURE:

The nature has inspired man to the noblest ideals and caused him to deify and worship its forces. Since the earliest time in the history of man, the Vedas are full of such instances. For example we find Sun (Mitra), Moon (Soma), fire (Agni), wind (Vayu), Varuna (water and thunder, lightning, and storm (Rudras) are deified into celestial beings. In many poetic hymns of Vedas respectful expressions of worship are made to these wonders of nature. God's hand was taken to be in everything and He became identified with the whole universe.¹

Indian art always keeps in close contact with nature in all her moods. With art and religious thoughts seeking the same end, the Hindu concept of the divine aspects of dance represent many fold activities of God.²

2.2.6 WESTERN, ORIENTAL AND GURU NANAK'S CONCEPT OF CREATION:

Western concept of creation of Universe is different from that of Indian or Oriental. The former's concept of creation of universe is from nothing (shun),³ whereas Indian theory is the arrangement of something already existing. 'Aekoham Bhausyam' - I am one let me be many. It conceives the unfolding of primordial being which has neither a beginning nor an end. Everything owes its origin to Mahashakti, energy and its evolution

1. The Dance in India, P 1.

2. Ibid

3. Holy Bible P 1

gave birth to sun, moon and other planets. The movement of energy gives birth to rhythm, from movement arises friction giving rise to sound. Therefore, universe is bound by rhythm and sound.

Projesh Banerji in his book Kathak dance through ages writes, "closely connected with the birth of rhythm and sound is the theory of the Pursha (man), Prakriti (nature) and Eternal force of Supreme Energy (Mahashakti) and these three taken as a whole, lead to the theory of origin of Dharma or men's duty towards Nature and Supreme Force.

The concept of Dharma (religion) gives birth to the gods and goddess with their respective attributes developing in the creation of the temples (Architecture) dance and music (art). This is the secret of Indian philosophy of spiritual life.

Dance is the ebullience of the soul, through the upsurge of all those vital energies which by their rhythmic expression of movement interpret the other mind of humanity in its search for grace".¹

2.2.7 GURU NANAK ON CREATION :

About the creation of universe Baba Nanak says, "By His command (Hukam), all forms came into being but His Will defies description. By His Will all souls came into being and by His Command they get into

1. Kathak Dance through Ages, P 2.

higher state. By His Command some are high, some low and by His Command pains and pleasures are pre-writ. All are subject to His Will, No one is out side the domain of His Will".¹

About the origin and nature of universe, Baba Nanak says, "For numerous Yugas there was pitch darkness (Void), in which the creator was settled in trance.² For countless Aeons there was darkness. There was neither earth nor skies. There was only the infinite order (will). There was neither night nor day nor sun or moon but only God existed in ceaseles trance. At that time neither forms of creation nor speech nor wind nor water existed. There was no hell or heaven. There was no Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva As it pleased Him, He created the world. He created Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He created continents and ne-ther worlds and made Himself manifest". Baba Nanak further says, " From the unattributed void, air and water were created and in a similar way the earth, sky the three worlds and all beings were created by His ordinance."⁴

1. Japji Pauri, P2.

2. S.G.G.S, P 1023.

3. Ibid, P 1035.

4. Ibid, P 1037.

According to Baba Nanak the whole world is His reflection, who is not subject to death or decay,¹ and the Lord is pervasive in each being. This means what is there in the universe is also to be found in the human body.

2 2.8 INDIAN DANCE'S SPIRITUAL POWER :

The dance was considered as the medium of interpretation for religion, creation and human aspirations besides being a source of pleasure. That is the reason why strong emphasis was laid on character of the artist. He was required to shun all agitation and lead a virtuous life. Indian dance is rife with spiritual power. It is said that Shri Chaitanya, a devotee of Lord Krishna would be filled with ecstasy and went about singing beautiful praises of Krishna and in the fullness of ecstasy would be moved into the most graceful dance the world had ever seen.² The dance not only attempts to portray the message of God but embodies the inspiration to become one with God.

2.2.9 REFERENCE TO DANCE IN PURANAS:

Next in importance to Vedas are the Puranas in which there are references about the importance of dance for learning other arts and progress in the spiritual field.³

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1. S.G.G.S, P 1038.
 2. Kathak Dance Through Ages, P 4.
 3. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 24.

2.2.10 QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF A DANCER :

Early authorities of Indian dance had a flare for perfection and therefore they laid down the qualities and qualifications which were essential for a dancer. To quote from Tradition of Indian Classical dance, the following qualifications were necessary for a female dancer; "The female dancer according to acknowledged authorities should have a perfect symmetrical body, a pleasing face, wide - open eyes, red lips, attractive teeth, a neck like spiral conch, arms like sinuous creepers, full rounded breasts, a slender waist, hips that are full, but not too padded and thighs resembling the trunk of an elephant. She should be neither very heavy nor very lean, neither very tall nor very short, and she should be either fair or dark in colour. She should in addition, exude charm and have agility, steadiness, endurance, confidence and a good memory. She should be witty, agreeable and fully devoted to the art. She should have absolute control of movement, step and timing, be endowed with a good voice and be able to dance to the accompaniment of both vocal and instrumental music. She should feel quite at ease when performing and she should know exactly when to begin and when to stop dancing".¹

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 60.

2.2.11 INFLUENCE OF DANCE ON OTHER ARTS:

The deep and abiding ideals of philosophy and aesthetics on which the Hindu dance is based influenced other arts like sculptures and paintings. Architecture and sculpture took an important place amongst the Indian arts when Buddhist builders started using stones for constructing their monuments about 272-231 B.C. It was Buddhists who from 2nd century A.D. onwards first used representations of Hindu deities like Shiva, Vishnu, Lakshmi and Indra in their sculptural art. And it was from them that Hindu religious sculptural and architectural arts took their inspiration starting from 6th century A.D. and reaching its peak in 13th century A.D. The temples became not only the centres of religious worship but of arts and learning. To make abstract theological teachings understood by average person symbols were created which explained the inner meanings of these precepts.¹

The ancient Indian sculptures had to study 32 silpa shastras (Rule of Craftmen) and understand Athurva Veda and the mystic vedic prayers (Mantras) by which the deities are invoked. Noble ideals, divine visions were born of their contemplation and imagination and transferred to stone. Thus from very early times, Indian worship of God through an image got established.

1. The Dance in India, P 14.

The art of dance depicting various aspects of God and their attributes became the subject matter of sculptures which can be seen in temples throughout India. We find dance sculptures at Bharhut, Amaravati, Aurangabad, Ajanta, Ellora, Khandagiri and Udayagiri rock cut cave temples. The Bharhut cave temple belongs to 200 B.C. It is situated half way between Allahabad (U.P.) and Jabalpur (M.P.). Amaravati belongs to 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. wherein dancing Apsaras are depicted. In Ajanta and Ellora dancing Nataraja is sculptured. In Khandagiri and Udagiri (Orissa state), on caves which are placed just before the beginning of Christian era, men and women dancers have been sculptured making offerings to the Jain Shrine. In fact, the dancing apsaras occupy an important place in Buddhist, Brahamanical and Jain sculptural art, indicating the feminine personality's grace and tender spirits devoid of earthly attachment.¹

The sculptures of Shiva's dance are found in the golden hall at Chidambaram or Tillai, which are said to have been placed in 6th century A.D. In Nataraja temple at Chidambaram there are sculptures of dancing Shiva which portrays creation, preservation and destruction. Similarly, in Brihadeswara temple at Tanjore, Hoysala temple Halebid (Mysore State), Shiva temples at Trichinopoly, Rameshwaram, the Jaganath temple at Puri, the

1. The Dance in India, P 15-16.

Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneshwar and the Sun temple at Konarak and Shiva temple at Kanchipuram, the sculptures depicting the mystic dances of Shiva can be seen.¹

The dances of Goddess Durga and Kali, twin aspects of Shiva can be seen in the temples of South. In the temple at Belur (Mysore State), Durga is six handed and is shown dancing her dance of destruction of evil whereas in the Devi temple at Chidambaram, she is shown slaying the evil Asura known as Mahisasuramardini. Kali's dance depicting destruction of evil is represented in Hoysala temple at Halebid.²

The sculpture of dances of Saraswati (Goddess of learning and music), of Lord Krishna subduing Kaliya and of Vishnu in guise of Mohini dancing to defeat Asura Bhasmasura are found in the temples of Belur and Halebid built by Hoysala king Bittige in 12th century. These are two of the few places where Goddess Saraswati who is the consort of Brahma, the creator, is shown as dancer. There are innumerable dance sculptures at the temples of Ambarnath (Maharashtra), at Puri and Bhubneshwar and in the medieval temples of Khajuraho. In the 13th century shrine of Konark there are numerous sculptures showing the dances of Shiva, Parvati, Ganesha, the Apsaras and dancing girls.

1. The Dance in India, P 16.

2. Ibid.

About sculptures depicting the dances by gods and goddess, Enakshi Bhavani observes as follows :-

" In each magnificent work of art, the whole idea underlying each dance has been vividly expressed. Whether it be parable or otherwise, - stories of gods or the graceful dance of apsaras, or depiction of classical dance, these many sculptures come to posterity as repositories of dance in India. The nobility of form, grace and rhythmic flow of these sculptures inspire lover of aesthetics and the arts with a deep sense of admiration. The uplifting philosophical concept they symbolise, impel a feeling of reverence in the beholder, as though their creation was motivated by divine influence. Indeed their appeal is universal, for they are true master pieces in every sense of the term".¹

1. The Dance in India, P 17-18.

PART C : HISTORICAL ASPECTS

2.3.1 EXISTENCE OF DANCE AND IT'S GROWTH IN SOCIETY:

The dance as an art came into existence with the growth of human society and civilization. The date of polished dance in the history of India is controversial. It is debatable as to which of the countries of the world was the most civilised. But the Indian civilisation is very ancient, if not the oldest.¹

The earliest civilisations discovered in the Indian sub-continent are those of Mahenjo Daro (in the Larkhana Distt. - Sind Pakistan) and Harappa (the Multan Distt. of West Pakistan) in the Indus Valley and are dated at about 6000 B.C. It would appear that dance by that time must have been developed considerably or at least must have played some important role in the society as one of the finds at Mohenjo Daro was a beautiful statuette of a dancing girl. However nothing is known about the dance techniques of this period.²

2.3.2 CONTRIBUTION OF NATYA SHASTRA TO DANCE:

Detailed codification of the art of dance is found in Bharat's Natya Shastra. The Natya Shastra examines in detail every aspect of art of drama, acting, dancing and music.

1. Art of Indian Dancing, P 7.

2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 17.

The date and authorship of Bharata's Natya Shastra are both in dispute. The book has been dated from the second century B.C. to third century A.D. Similarly, there is less certainty about its author.¹ Mohan Kokar dates it as 2nd century A.D.²

Rina Singha and R. Massey in their book 'Indian Dances' write, "Bharat, originally meant a dancer - actor so that the title could mean simply, 'A Shastra on drama for the Dancer - Actor.' On the other hand 'Bharata' is also a name and so it is possible that the title means a Shastra on drama by Bharata."³

Another view is that he was a theoretician who compiled the matter gathered from the writings of others. Yet another view is that Bharata is not the name of a person but a word, an acrostic, formed by combining the initial syllables of Bhava, Raga, and Tala, which stand for expression. Musical mode and rhythm respectively constitute the three essential ingredients of the dance art. The most commonly accepted version is that Bharata Muni was an ascetic scholar who composed an exhaustive treatise on theory and practice of art of drama, dance and music and gave it the name Natya Shastra.⁴ He was a practical man, a technocrat, a man of theatre and a producer-cum-director.⁵

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 21.
2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 25.
3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 21.
4. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 48.
5. Journal of Indian Musical Society, P 7.

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2.3.3 CONTRIBUTION OF PURANAS AND OTHER TREATISES:

The next important period in the history of India is that of the two epics the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Here too we find ample evidence of the existence of dance as an art, as an activity and as an adjunct to ceremony. We find in Ramayana that Ayodhya had four principal halls and one of them was exclusively meant for dancing women. The birth, wedding and coronation of Rama was marked by great revelry which included performances of dances and music. The king Ravana used to sing and dance in praise of Shiva. He had professional dancers in his court. The monkeys who formed the army of Rama were fond of dancing.¹

In Mahabharata too references to dancing are also found. Arjuna, while in exile incognito took up the assignment of teaching dance and music to Uttara, the daughter of king Virat.² It can, therefore, be concluded that dancing had a very respectable place in those days in the society.

1. Ramcharita Manas edited by Human, Prasad, Poddar (Hindi), P 203-204.

Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 23-24

Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itihas, P 89,

2. Sachitra Mahabharat edited by Kunj Bihari Lal, P 221-223.

Next to Vedas, Ramayana and Mahabharata, the sacred books of Hindus are Puranas. There are 18 major Puranas and it is said that their compilation commenced in 1000 years B.C. and concluded in 10th century A.D. Dance was a well developed and respected art in the times of early Puranas. In Vishnu Dharmotra Purana, it is written that to be a good sculptor or carver it is essential to be a good painter and have mastery of dancing. It is also written therein that one who worships God through dancing is assured of liberation. In Shiva Purana it is written that the temple of Shiva should have beautiful girls who should be proficient in the art of singing and dancing. The Devi Bhagavata Purana also prescribes the adoration of Devi by the performance of music and dance amongst other rituals. The Brahmavaivarta, the Skands and the Bhagavata Puranas also make mention of dancing. Bhagavata Purana gives a detailed description of Krishna's dances, the Raas Lila. In the Agni Purana which is said to have been written about 9th century A.D, there is a separate section dealing with the use of the body and limbs in dancing and acting.¹

In the course of time other technical treatises such as Nandi Keshwara, Abhinaya Darpan, Dhananjaya's Dasa Rupka and Sangeet Ratnakar by Sharang Dev were written.²

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 22-23.
 2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 8.

2.3.4 DANCE IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE FROM 1st TO 5th CENTURY:

First century to 5th century occupies an important place in the history of Indian classical literature. It was during this period that the four of the earliest greatest poets and play writers made immortal contributions. These were Asvaghosa, Bhasa, Kalidasa and Sundraka.

Asvaghosa who lived in about first or 2nd century A.D. was the first author of Kavya literature. He was a Buddhist philosopher. He propagated the message of Buddha through three principal plays namely Buddha Charita, Saundra Nanda and Sariputra Prakarama. Though he has not dealt with the dance directly, yet has acknowledged its power of charm. In Buddha Charita, he has written the story relating to daughter of Mara (the God of Evil) attempting to seduce Gautam through dancing etc.

Bhasa, who lived in the 2nd and 3rd century A.D. wrote 123 plays. In two of his plays namely Bala Charit and Pancharatra, he describes Halisaka dance. This dance was performed by boys and girls to the accompaniment of singing on occasions of King's birthday or festivals, like Indra Yazna and Bhanuramba. From the writings of Bhasa it can be inferred that the women of respectable families used to receive training in dance and this art was held in high esteem and given a respectful place in society.¹

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 25-26.

Kalidasa, a well known poet and playwright is famous throughout the world. He is even termed as Shakespear of India. Dance was very dear to him. Mohan Khokar in his book Traditions of Indian Classical Dance writes about him as follows :-

"Kalidasa extols dancing as the embodiment of all the moods of man and likens it to a sacrificial feast pleasing to the eyes of Gods. Kalidasa knows what physical attributes go to make the ideal dancer and he spells these out in describing the heroine in Malavikagnimitram. How a dancer should perform - her deportment, her sense of timing, her involvement with the rendering, her communication with the beholder - these and several other nuances of the art does Kalidasa delineate in revealing details. His knowledge of the dance is not that of a mere spectator but of a seasoned aesthetic. And it is perhaps because of this that we find him coolly plant dance terms as suits his fancy during the course of his work.

We learn from Kalidasa that dancing was highly favoured and patronised by royalty. It was commonly practised by princesses, and palaces were often provided with special chambers for lessons in dancing. Women of richer classes pursued the art avidly, and courtesans danced to entertain the people. Teachers

were mostly males, and the system of imparting instruction was through personal tuition and not through schools or academies".¹

In Meghaduta of Kalidasa, there is a reference to the temple of Mahakala which had dancing girls who danced before the deity every evening.²

2.3.5 SUDRAKA, OTHER AUTHORITIES AND DARVIDIANS:

Sudraka wrote the play Mricchakatika. The principal character Vasantsena in this play is by profession, a dancer. Panini who lived between 700 and 600 B.C, compiled the earliest manual of Sanskrit Grammar (Ashtadhyai), while commenting on the root Nrith - to dance, he refers to Silalin and Krisasava who are said to be authors of certain essentials and fundamental conditions of the dance Chanakya, an astute minister of Ashoka's predecessor Chandragupta, who lived about 4th century B.C, in his book Arthashastra (State craft) has mentioned about dancing, acting, singing etc, which were then under the state control which maintained professionals. Patanjali, who lived in the 2nd century B.C. also wrote a grammar Mahabhashya in which he has made references to two plays Kamsavadha and Balidandha which used to be performed with mime in the manner of dancing. Similarly Vatsyayana who

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 26.

2. Kathak Dance Through Ages, P 8.

lived in 3rd century A.D and wrote Kamasutra has given a list of 64 arts in which music and dance rank high are considered to be essential to make a man complete. ¹

Darvidians, the original inhabitants of India, were fond of various arts, including dancing, is proved by the excavations of pre-Aryan sites. With the aryanization of India, dance continued to play an important part in the lives of these people particularly as it was closely related to religion. ²

2.3.6 PURPOSE OF DANCE:

Dance was used for pleasing the Gods in temples. The dance performed in temples had religious sentiments and was spiritual. Devdasis were attached to temples for this purpose. References are made in the inscriptions of Raja and other Chola kings in Tanjore Distt in the 11th century, of theatres and dancer in shrines. From the temple of Jaganath at Puri and in almost all the principal temples of South India, Devadasis were engaged for dancing. ³

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 27.
 2. Indian Dance, their History and Growth, P 33.
 3. Art of Indian Dancing, P 18-19.

In Tamil literature of Sangam age which lasted from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D, we find mention of various types of dances which are performed at different occasions. For example Velanveriyatal was performed in honour of Murugan; Vallikoothu dance was dedicated to Valli, the counter part of Murugan; Kala-nilai Koothu was performed by soldiers on their return to celebrate the victory. Kings and noblemen kept dancing girls in their regular employment. It is said that when the Chera king Senkuttuvan went on a military expedition to North, he had with him over one hundred dancing girls.¹

In the Buddhist literature and that of Jains there are references of dancing in early times. The life story of Buddha itself provides an example thereof. The parents of Gautam Buddha provided him dancing girls and singers with a view to diverting his attention from spiritual leanings, fearing this may lead to detachment from worldly things.² When Buddha died, the Mallas, a clan of people offered reverence to his earthly remains with dance and music. In the days of Buddha, Amarpali was a famous dancer with whom he had taken food and later she turned a Buddhist nun. Chulavagga is a book which describes

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 28.
 2. 2500 Years of Buddhism P 22.

the life of Buddhist monks. It is mentioned therein that their recreation inter-alia included dancing with women. In the Buddhist text Milinad Panha (questions of Milinda) which describes the discussions that King Milinda had with Nagasena, it is mentioned that the inhabitants of the royal city of Saklaa, in Punjab, included musicians, dancers and actors.¹

The early literature of the Jains compiled between 4th century B.C. and 5th century A.D. indicate that dancing was prevalent in those days. There were several types of courtesans which also included accomplished dancers and were known as Nattiyao. In the Jains scripture Naya dhamma Kaha, there is reference to Champa, a courtesan who was proficient in singing and dancing. His charges were one thousand coins per performance and he had a privileged status in the society and was authorised to carry Royal umberalla. In the Uttarakhyana, it is written that Uddyana King of Sindhu used to play Veena on which his wife Prabhavati used to dance. Jain texts lists 72 types of arts grouped under 13 heads, one of which includes dancing, singing, instrumental music and drumming. In the Raya Paseniya which is a work in

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 29.
Basic Tenets of Buddhism, P 26.

the form of dialogue between king Paesi and Keshkumara, a monk, describes 32 kinds of dance and dance-drama with names unknown to classic Sanskrit literature in the field of this art.¹

A legend says that the Jain Buddhists had come to terms with God regarding the introduction of dancing girls into their austere religion. The pillars of temple Sittanavasi are adorned with figures of dancing girls.²

In the 7th century A.D. Harsha Vardhana, the king of Kanauj, commonly known as Harsha, wrote three plays Ratnavali, Nagananda and Priyadarshika in which references of dancing are found. So much so that in Priyadarshika it is written that dancing and singing are accomplishments which every noble woman should have. Bana, a courtesan of Harsha wrote two prose works namely Kadambari and Harshacharita. The former is love story and copious references are made therein about dances. Harshacharita deals with the life and deeds of Harsha. It is mentioned therein that Harsha's birth was celebrated with great gaiety and dancing girls gave their performances. It is also mentioned therein that Harsha's sister Rajyashree used to take lessons in dancing and singing from the very childhood.³

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1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 30.
 2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 19.
 3. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 33.

2.3.7 PATRONAGE BY KASHMIR RULERS AND SLAVE DYNASTY:

In 1149 A.D. Kalhana a poet and historian of Kashmir wrote Raja Tarangiri, a work on rulers of Kashmir. In this he cites number of examples of dancing girls and their royal patrons. Damodar Gupta, a Kashmir poet who lived in early part of 9th century and was attached to the court of King Jayapida of Kashmir wrote Kuttanimala which deals with the lives and intrigues of courtesans. King Jayapiad married twice and one of his wives was Kamala, a dancing girl. In the first half of 10th century Chakravarman, king of Kashmir, married a dancing girl named Humsi and made her principal queen. King Ananta of Kashmir married Sahaja, a devadasi, and when in 1089 A.D. he committed suicide, Sahaja became Sati by entering the funeral pyre. From 1089 to 1101 Harshadeva ruled over Kashmir and he had great passion for the art of dance. Thakkana, one of his favourite dancing girl brought about his down fall by conspiring with his rivals to dethrone him. Uchhala, who succeeded Harshadeva married Jaymati a dancing girl of repute.¹

During the slave dynasty which was founded in 1206 A.D. by Kutb-ud-Din, there was a society of which musicians and dancing girls were the members. They used to give performances in the palaces of

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 34-35.

princes. During the period of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, who ascended the throne of Kashmir in 1422 A.D., and Sultan Hassan Shah who ruled Kashmir from 1472 to 1484 A.D., dancing was a common feature. It is said that Sultan Hassan Shah had about 1200 musicians in his service.¹

2.3.8 EARLY CENTURIES IN SOUTH AND MARATHA RULE:

In the south in the early centuries of Christian era, Chola, Pallavas, Chera and Pandya Kingdoms too had poets and dancing was prevalent.²

Marathas who were in power from 1674 to 1885 A.D. exhibited intense love and interest in the art of music and dance.³

2.3.9 IMPACT OF DANCE ON OTHER ARTS:

It can be said with great emphasis that Indian dance had a great impact on all other arts of India like sculpture, painting and literature. India's pre-history and pro-history also provide sufficient evidence to this effect.

Dance, as a social activity and a profession has been inseparably connected with the life cycle including religious rites in India. It can be said

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance , P 36.

2. Ibid, P 34-35.

3. Ibid, P 40-41.

that Indian dance tradition is not merely an art nor is it merely a spontaneous expression of joy or harmony with nature; it is an expression of philosophy of India.

2.3 10 MAIN CATEGORIES OF DANCE FORMS:

The main categories into which dance forms can be divided are Nritta, comprising hand and foot movements which do not signify any specific theme and Nritya which is danced in the form of gestures-language, depicting distinct ideas or themes. Again, according to quality or kind it is distinguished as Tandav (masculine and vigorous) and Lasya (femine, graceful and tender). All schools of classical dance have these forms. Different regions have however developed their own styles by incorporating movements from folk or tribal dances which are more earthly and close to soil. All Indian dances require a high degree of perfection and co-ordination of hand, foot and body movement. They are performed bare footed and generally with anklets and vary according to style. The accompanying percussion instrument, the very essence of dance also varies according to the style of dance and is absolutely essential.¹

1. Employment News (Weekly), 22-28 Sep 1990,
Vol XV, No 25, P 2.

Dance Drama of India and the East, P 8.

Medieval temples provide ample evidence that sculptors had complete knowledge of the Art of dance. The medieval period is not restricted to sculptures in temples alone. There are sizable volumes of creative writings which prove that dance was widely practised and adored. Sarangadeva in Sangeeta Ratanakara which is a treatise on music allotted a separate exhaustive chapter on dance. By and large, the writer follows the Natya shastra and occasionally Abhinaya Darpana. However, his work provides evidence to the fact that while the traditions in Natya Shastra were generally followed but there were departures and modifications therefrom. For example, he categorises basic movements under two heads namely pure (Suddha) and regional variants(desastha). Again he makes a mention of purely classical form under the head of Sudha and regional variants under the head of Desi Paddhatis. In fact Sarangadeva was not the first to introduce this concept. Bhoja in his Srinagara - Prakasa and Somesvara in Manasollasa had already written these concepts and had accepted regional styles and this contributed greatly to further development of distinctive classical styles of dance.

2.3.11 NANAK'S CONCEPT OF DANCE GURUS:

The dance Gurus based their teachings on the treatise but it was passed down to their disciples orally. In this connection Rina Singha and R Massey in their book Indian Dances have written as follows:-

" The Dance Gurus based their teachings on this treatise but it was handed down to their chelas (disciples) practically by word of mouth. In any case, they reserved the most precious secrets of their art for selected chelas only, who in their turn, guarded them carefully so that it was extremely difficult for outsiders to make a study of the subject. European Sanskritists knew of the Natya Shastra from references to it in other books but it was believed that all manuscripts had been lost. It was only in the later half of the last century that, while working on a medieval work on drama, Hall, came on a manuscript of the Natya Shastra. This led to others being discovered and much work was done by German Heyman and by the French men Regnand, Groosset and Levi".¹

Baba Nanak has emphasised the necessity of a Guru/Master for the aspirant in the spiritual field. Under his guidance he can imbibe firm devotion for

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 21-22.

the Lord and achieve salvation. The excerpts from Guru Nanak's hymns also tell how can the Guru help the disciple.

(i) There is no distinction between the divinity - inspired Guru and God.¹

(ii) The Lord and the Master is one image. Without the guidance of the holy preceptor the illusion is not shed and the unknowable can not be attained. By listening to the Guru's words supreme joy is attained. By the holy preceptor realization is granted and by His guidance the supreme being is beheld in all.²

(iii) By the guidance of the master a devotee blooms spontaneously and acts in firm devotion. It is by his guidance that one attains union with God and attains the devotion in Nam.³

(iv) By contact with the holy preceptor the darkness is lifted.⁴

(v) By masters guidance, enlightenment is achieved and mind is fixed in meditation and faith, and divine reality is realized. It is by his guidance that holy Divine Nam

1. S G.G.S , P 504.

2. Ibid, P 1043.

3. Ibid, P 1174.

4. Ibid, P 877.

is attained.¹

(vi) By contact with the holy preceptor Divine Grace comes. Without his guidance holy Nam is not attained. It is by contact with the Guru, the fear of God abides in the mind.²

(vii) The master is the image of gods, image of the Lord unknowable and unpenetrable mystery. Illumination about the three worlds comes by service to the master.³

(viii) Without accepting the Master's words, the mind does not find poise.⁴

(ix) Without contact with the holy preceptor all go about swollen with pride. The holy word of the master is the ship with the help of which one swims across the ocean of existence. By one glance perfectly endowed, preceptor confers liberation. One who has faith in the master, his mind shall attain poise. By his holy glance single minded devotion is attained that brings liberation.⁵

1. S.G.G.S., P 414.

2. Ibid, P 635.

3. Ibid, P 1125.

4. Ibid, P 415.

5. Ibid, P 413.

(x) By service to the holy preceptor your eyes behold the Lord and by realization of his words the sorrow is eliminated.¹

(xi) The master's word is the holy music (Nad) and divine knowledge (vedas) by means of which mind is absorbed in the Lord and it is by the union with the Master, the Lord grants liberation.²

(xii) About studying of Shastras, Simrities and Puranas, Baba Nanak has said that by studying these books men make controversial expositions not realizing the essence. Without the guidance of perfectly endowed master the essence is not found.³

(xiii) Baba Guru Nanak about the preceptor posed the following questions :-

How can without the Master's guidance liberation be attained?

How can without the Master's guidance one meditate on the Divine Nam ? He gives the answer to these in the same hymn saying,

" Adopt the teachings of the Master and swim across the impassable ocean of the world.⁴

1. S.G.G.S., P 416.
 2. Ibid, P 879.
 3. Ibid, P 1032.
 4. Ibid, P 1041.

(xiv) Baba Nanak has equated the Guru's words with that of elephants goad, which confirms the holy Nam in the Mind whereby all poses of piety vanish.¹

2.3.12 EFFECT OF SHIFT IN RELIGIOUS EMPHASIS:

The shift in religious emphasis influenced regional literary traditions which had an impact on the themes of dance. Prior to 11th-12th century, the traditions had been saivite. Thereafter with the appearance of Geet Govinda, the religious impulses were directed towards the worship of Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, giving rise to the cult of Vaishnavism and the dances had the themes of Krishna's exploits which also gave unity to dance styles.²

The British system of education did not recognise arts as subject, with the result that the generation of the 19th century was isolated from the art traditions of the country. However, the devotees of the art continued to practice it in their homes. The art virtually died by the 20th century and what could be seen of it was a degenerated form known as Nautch in North and Sadir in South.³

1. S.G.G.S, P 636.

2. Indian Classical Dance, P 4.

3. Ibid,.

After the independence, the interest in dance revived as a national heritage and during the last five decades many layers of past artistic glory have been uncovered.

I have discussed the theoretical aspect of origin of dance in order to give an insight into the background of the traditions of folk dances.

CHAPTER III

TYPES OF FOLK DANCES IN PUNJAB

- (a) Bhangra, Gidda, Kikali, Sammi, Raas Lila and Jhumar etc.
- (b) Classification of Dances Male, Female and Mixed.
- (c) Occasions like Sowing Grains, Harvesting, Threshing, Festivals, Marriages, Birth of a Child and Other Social Functions.

PART ATYPES OF FOLK DANCES IN PUNJAB

3.1.1 Place of Punjab in Indian History.

PART BFOLK DANCES OF PUNJAB

- 3.2.1 Bhangra.
- 3.2.2 Gidda.
- 3.2.3 Jhumar.
- 3.2.4 Sammi.
- 3.2.5 Kikli.
- 3.2.6 Luddi.
- 3.2.7 Dandas.
- 3.2.8 Raas Lila.
- 3.2.9 Karthi.
- 3.2.10 Khattak.
- 3.2.11 Lakhtai.
- 3.2.12 Dharees.
- 3.2.13 Lughthi.
- 3.2.14 Gurba.
- 3.2.15 Dhamaal.
- 3.2.16 Langoor.
- 3.2.17 Dances on Guru Nanak's Compositions -
Kinri, Jikra, Hingal and Malda.

PART C

CLASSIFICATION OF DANCES

3.3.1 Male, Female and Mixed.

PART D

DANCE OCCASIONS AND FESTIVALS

3.4.1 Occasions on Which Dances are Performed.

3.4.2 Festivals in India and Punjab from
January to December.

PART A : TYPES OF FOLK DANCES IN PUNJAB

3.1.1 PLACE OF PUNJAB IN INDIAN HISTORY:

The area which we now call Punjab finds mention in Rig Veda. In the History of the Punjab, Vol I, L.M. Joshi and Fauja Singh write as follows about the composition of Punjab :-

" The Punjab was comprised in the land watered by what the Rig Veda call 'the seven sindhus (rivers)', and these seven are believed to have included the Indus and its five Eastern tributaries together with either the Eastern river Sarasvati or the Kubha (later Kuhu, the modern Kabul) which is a Western tributary of Indus. However, in one hymn (VII. 36.6) the Rig Veda mentions the Sindhu (Indus) as the 'mother' of the rivers and the Sarasvati 'the seventh'. This renders the Sarasvati's claim stronger than the Kubha's but elsewhere Sarasvati is said to have seven rivers as her sisters (VI.61.10). The Sarasvati is also once invoked side by side with the Seven Sindhus (VIII.54.4). The name Punjab (correctly Panjab) meaning 'the Five Rivers', is the Persian form of Indian Pancanada (Land of the five rivers) found in various works including the epics and Puranas. The Mahabharata (VII.44) gives us to understand that the five rivers watering this

land are the Satadru (Sutlej), Vipasa (Beas), Airavati or Iravati (Ravi), Chandrabhaga (Chenab) and Vitasta (Jhelum) together with 'the sixth' which is the Sindhu (Indus). The rivers were really six, but some early Muslim writers made the number five by omitting a tributary. Thus, Wassaf speaks of five rivers as Sind (Indus), Jelum, the river of Lohawar (Lahore, i.e. the Ravi), Satlut (Sutlej) and Biyah (Beas)....."¹

The composite Punjab under the British rule before the partition of India in 1947 had five divisions namely Ambala, Jullundur, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Multan. It had 29 districts, besides the princely states. These districts were Hisar, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal, Ambala, Kangra, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozpur, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Sheikhpura, Gujrat, Jehlam, Rawalpindi, Attock, Simla, Shahpur, Mianwali, Montgomery, Layllpur, Jhang, Multan, Muzafarpur and Dera Gazi Khan.²

North west frontier was once a part of Punjab but was made a separate province in 1901.³

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1. History of the Punjab, Vol I, P 26-27.
 2. Land of Five Rivers, Vol I of the Punjab Administrative Report 1921-22.
 3. Punjab under the British Rule, Vol I, P 1.

With the partition of India in 1947, Punjab was divided into two parts namely, East Punjab and West Punjab. The former was included in India and the latter in Pakistan. Soon after partition of India, native states on each side also merged in India or Pakistan.

According to Redcliff Award, 13 districts comprising the whole of Jullundur division and Ambala division, and Amritsar of Lahore division as well as three tehsils (Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Batala) of Gurdaspur District and part of Kasur Tehsil of Lahore district were allotted to East Punjab and remaining areas to West Punjab.¹

After the merger of Pepsu, the Eastern part of the former Punjab province falling in India had the districts of Ambala, Amritsar, Bhatinda, Ferozepur, Gurdaspur, Gurgaon, Hisar, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Kangra Kapurthala, Karnal, Ludhiana, Mohindergarh, Patiala, Rohtak, Sangrur and Simla.

In 1966, there was further division of the Punjab in India and this time into three parts. State of Haryana was carved out and with the granting of statehood to Himachal Pradesh, hilly tracts were transferred to it. The result was that the districts which remained in Punjab State of India were Amritsar, Bhatinda, Ferozepur, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Kapurthala,

1. Punjab Since Partition, P 76.

Ludhiana, Patiala, Ropar and Sangrur excluding some parts of it which formed Jind District of Haryana. Minor changes such as the creation of Faridkot District with parts of Ferozepur and Bhatinda districts were made latter.¹

Stone age culture is the earliest period of human civilization. It is divided into Palaeolithic and Neolithic Ages. In Greek 'Lithos', means stone 'Palios' and 'Neo' means 'old' and 'new' respectively. Thus the Early or Old Stone age is called Palaeolithic Age and Late or New Stone Age is called Neolithic Age. Palaeolithic Age in India is said to be 500,000 years old. Important pre-historic discoveries in the Punjab were made by De Terra and T.T. Paterson in 1935 during his operation in Poonch to Salt Range between Indus and Jehlum. De Terra discovered Lithic equipment of early man. Other Stone Age cities discovered by him were in Sohan basin and territory between Attock and the junction of Indus and Sohan. Recent researches have shown that Hoshiarpur had been the habitat of Palaeolithic man. Similar other cities were also discovered in East Punjab. To cite a few : Dher Majra, Nalagarh and Cite in the vicinity of Pinjore.

1. History of the Punjab, Vol I, P 25-26.

The palaeolithic man was not familiar with agriculture and domestication of animals. He lived on wild fruits, roots and flesh of animals. Food taken was raw as he did not know how to produce fire. He lived under the shade of trees and caves of mountains.¹

In the Neolithic age man learnt the art of agriculture, domestication of animals, lighting of fire, building of houses and manufacture of cloth with fiber of plants and hair of animals.

It was in 1963 that some polished stone celts typical of Neolithical culture were discovered at Ror and Dibbar in Beas - Banguga Valley in Punjab.²

Stone age was succeeded by Copper and Bronze age in Northern India, but Southern India witnessed the emergence of Iron age immediately after the stone age.

Proto-historic culture also developed in Punjab. Proto-historic people were no more hunting and fishing communities but were agricultural communities. Proto-historic sites at Harappa in Montgomery district were discovered in 1921 and at Mohenjodaro in district Larkana, Sind (Pakistan) in 1922. Since the earliest sites were located on the banks of Indus and its tributaries, it was called as Indus Valley culture. Later on, similar sites were also discovered at many places

1. History of the Punjab, Vol I, P 47-48.

2. Ibid, P 49.

in India. To name some of these are Sharanpur district, Meerut district, Bulandshahar district, Ropar in Punjab and Daulatpur in Haryana. Subsequent excavations also revealed that pre-Harappan culture flourished in the beds of Sarasvati, and Drsadvati at Vananwali, Hirka, Talwara, etc in the 3rd millennium B.C. The most important pre-Harappan settlement has been discovered at Metathal situated on the old course of Yamuna near Bhiwani. There are over 40 sites in Punjab region relating to Harappan culture. Some of the important ones are Ropar, Kotla Nihang, Bara, 8 km from Ropar, Dhang, a village 19 km from Ropar, Sanghol in Distt Ludhiana, Madhopur village, 24 km from Jullundhur and Chandigarh.¹

Aryans came to Punjab around 1500 B.C. They came in successive waves to Punjab from North-West between 1500 B.C. and 800 B.C. Punjab, for the first time, perhaps witnessed constant warfare for several centuries, in which Aryans were successful.

Radh Kumad Mookerji in Hindu civilization Part Bombay, 1957, P 21 remarks, "Judging from the paucity of finds of offensive and defensive weapons, it may be held that the people of Mohenjodaro were not very militarist or much troubled by fears of invasions".²

1. History of the Punjab, Vol I, P 49.

2. Ibid, P 2.

Aryans were good horsemen armed with broad axes. Aryan conquest of Punjab resulted in the setback of city life and gave rise to village culture. Punjab was thus the earliest part of India to be Aryanised.¹

References to Punjab are found in the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. Kaikeyi, the youngest wife of king Dasaratha belonged to Kekaya Janapada which formed a part of ancient Punjab. The territory ruled by Kekayas comprised the districts of Jhelum, Shahpur, Gujranwala and Lahore and parts of the districts of Gujrat, Layallpur and Jhang (now in Pakistan). Janapada's capital was Girivaraja which is now called Jalalpur situated on the bank of river Jehlum.²

The battle between Kauravas and Pandavas was fought at Kurukshetra and it was at this place that Lord Krishna gave the Gita's discourse to Arjuna.

The oldest information on the ways of life is found in the Vedic literature. Of these the Rigveda, the earliest treatise, was prepared about 1500-1200 B.C. in Punjab.³

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1. History of the Punjab, Vol I, P 3.
 2. Ibid, P 167.
 3. Musical Instruments of India, their History and Development, P 8.

The ancient Punjab's contribution to education has been tremendous. Panini, a famous grammarian was born in Punjab. The philosopher King Asvapati of Upanisadic fame belonged to Kekaya country in Punjab.¹

Taxila (Taksasila) which is situated 20 miles North of Rawalpindi had been a famous seat of learning. In the 6th century B.C. Taxila was the capital of King Puskarasarin of Gandhara. The city was a great centre of trade and commerce. It being the prime seat of learning and education in the age of Buddha, students from far and wide places used to come to receive advanced education in various arts and sciences. The renowned teacher of medicine in Taxila was Atreya. One of the greatest product of Taxila college was Jivaka Kumarabhritya. He learnt the science of removing diseases from inside the skull of man through surgical operations. It is believed that Chandragupta Maurya, the founder of Mauryan empire received military and diplomatic training in a college at Taxila from Chanakya (Kautalya), where he was a professor.²

Punjab had to face the brunt of all invasions on India from across the Himalayas as the invaders had to pass through Punjab which served as sword arm

1. History of the Punjab, Vol I, P 7.

2. Ibid, P 316.

of India. This had a great impact in moulding Punjab's character. It made them robust, sturdy and martial in character, making best of the life in peace times, joyful, hospitable, sincere and helpful to fellow beings. Majority of people were agriculturist and Punjab has always been considered as granary of India. Collective dancing and singing punctuated their every festive activity, be it sowing, harvesting, celebrating births and marriages.

PART B : FOLK DANCES OF PUNJAB

The folk dances of Punjab are :-

1. Bhangra.
2. Gidda.
3. Jhumar.
4. Sammi.
5. Kikli.
6. Luddi.
7. Dandas.
8. Raas Lila.
9. Karthi.
10. Khattak.
11. Lakhtai.
12. Dharees.
13. Lughthi.
14. Garba.
15. Dhamaal.
16. Langoor.
17. Kinri.
18. Jikra.
19. Malda.
20. Hingal.

3.2.1 BHANGRA:

Bhangra is a most popular male dance of Punjab. After sowing the wheat crop, the young men gather in open field under the light of full moon. With the beat of the drum, the dancers begin to move in the circle in which the new comers can join any time, without breaking the continuity of the dance. The rhythm of the dance is very simple and the tune of the songs are taken from the traditional oral poetry of Punjab called Boli or Dhola. It starts with a verse which relates to a woman whom a person has loved and lost or a person would like to love and possess. With each new Boli, the dancers change their steps and shout Bale-Bale, Oai-Oai and Uh-uh. In the beginning the tempo of the dance is slow with the movement of the shoulders and little jumping. After a short time the movements of the body become vigorous with the raising of both the hands and the tempo of dance becomes fast. Within the circle, a pair of dancers come dancing in the centre and after sometime again return to their places. Each pair of dancers show many types of movements. Some are graceful, some acrobatic and quite difficult. There are no hard and fast rules in Bhangra.

No one knows about the origin of Bhangra. One myth is that when man first tasted wheat he felt very

happy and started jumping. Jumps are an important part of Bhangra. Some people say that followers of Lord Shiva used to dance while praying after consuming 'Bhang'. They used to hop on one leg with arms stretched upwards. That is why this dance is termed as Bhangra. According to Dr Nahar Singh this is not the correct view. His view is that the term Bhangra 'is not derived from Bhang'.¹

Another saying is that Bhangra originated from a tribal dance called Bagha. This term was changed to Baghra and then to Bhangra. There was a time when only musclemen performed Bhangra. The new born was given two types of 'Gurhti' one for Wrestling and another for Bhangra. Children were physically prepared for this dance because physical strength was exhibited in this dance. The Sialkoti Bhangra at Wazirabad in Pakistan was very famous. On Baisakhi, sturdy youth from Gujranwala, Sheikhupura, Gujarat and Sialkot used to come at Wazirabad in order to show their strength in Bhangra. Before partition, Bhangra was a multi-community fun indulged in by Jat Sikhs, Saints, Hindu Rajputs, Mahashas and Muslim Rajputs at the time of Baisakhi, Janmashtmi, Lohri, besides fairs and marriages. The persons who migrated from Pakistan and settled around Gurdaspur and Dera Baba Nanak kept alive the

1. The Tribune, May 22nd, 1989, P 7, Article by Nirmal Sandhu.

traditional Bhangra.¹

The beat in Bhangra on Dhol (Drum) is

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8
Dha	Ge	Na	Ti		Na	Ka	Dhin	Na

The costume of Bhangra is lower Dhoti (Tahmat-lungi), Kurta, colourful waist coat and a colourful turban.

Dhol is the main rhythmic instrument. Algosa is also played. Now other percussion instruments like cymbals and Jhanj are also used.²

3.2.2. GIDDA:

Gidda is a famous dance which is performed by women of Punjab on festivals like Teej, Lohri, Karva Chauth and on other occasions of festivals like betrothal, marriage, child birth and other celebrations of happy occasions. Gidda is performed with clapping of hands and singing bolies. While performing Gidda in fast tempo, the dancers produce the sound of 'Phoo Phoo' after covering their faces. While singing some bolies the women also produce the sound of whistle from their mouths. Generally the bolies are based on quarrels

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1. The Tribune, May 22nd, 1989, P 7, Article by Nirmal Sandhu.
 2. Traditions of Indian Folk Dance, P 170.

between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law or some sarcastic remarks on sister-in-laws and brother-in-laws. The instrument used in Gidda is Dholak.

Dress worn in Gidda is salwar or langha and shirt with a heavily embroidered colourful dupatta. Pulkari and bagh is also used. Ornaments like sagi phool, nath, tikka, tabati and bangles are worn by dancers.

In the Malva area it is also danced by men, with singing of bolies and playing of folk instruments.

3.2.3 JHUMAR:

In Muzzafargarh District, now in Pakistan, Jhumar was very popular and it is particularly performed at every wedding besides other celebrations. It is a simple dance based on usual circle, accompanied by musicians and the clapping of the hands by the dancers themselves.¹ It is also known by the name of Ghoomar.

On the occasion of Baisakhi, besides Bhangra and Gidda, Jhumar is also danced in Punjab. Although it shares many common features with Bhangra, yet it differs from it in thematic contents and gaits. The emphasis in this is on recreating the gaits of animals and birds. Strictly speaking, in Bhangra there is no attempt to show the movements of sowing and reaping

1. Folk Dance of India, P 142.

the harvest whereas in the Jhumar all the functions of daily life are recreated. The pairs of dancers who come into the control area imitate the movements of the animals they rear. Two men become bullocks of the field, a third plough and a fourth the farmer. The ploughing of the field, sowing of the seeds and harvesting are shown step by step. The crops are cut and then the dancers again rejoin into a circle and dance very much in the manner like Bhangra.¹

Dress worn by the men is the same as worn in Bhangra. The Jhumar dance was always performed by the Baluchis (Residents of Baluchistan).²

Though Jhumar was mostly performed in West Punjab, but now it is also performed in East Punjab, which is part of India.

As the name implies, Jhumar consists of swaying and swinging. It is also danced by women. The women wear loose shirts. Clapping their hands while twisting themselves, in and out of the folds of their garments, they whirl and sit, and sway and bend in endless motions. They swing their hips and sway on their waists like a snake. The men too dance very much in the same manner.

1. Traditions of Indian Folk Dance, P 15 and 171.

2. Folk Dance of India, P 155.

The musical accompaniment is Dholak (a small drum) and Sarangi.¹

Jhumar as danced by men is different from that danced by women in as much as it represents the sturdy spirit of the peasantry. The drummer stands in the middle and the dancers begin their circular movement at a great speed singing in chorus. The dance reaches a terrific pitch with much stamping of feet, clenching of fists, and waving of arms. On the other hand, movements in Jhumar as danced by women are very lyrical and graceful. It begins with a circle, various patterns are formed, broken up, inter-mingled, in rhythmic succession. The dancers wear colourful skirts made of yards and yards of cotton or silk.²

3.2.4 SAMMI

It is a romantic dance which was very popular with the women of Jhang district (West Punjab), where Heer and Ranjha loved each other. It is a dance of moon light. Its origin is linked with a legend. It is said that a Princess named Sammie, fell in love with a handsome Prince Dhola, who happened to pass on a white steed under the balcony of her palace. He, too, fell in love with her and promised to come again, but never came back, leaving the princess longing

1. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol. X, No. 4, Spring 1962, P 44.

2. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol. V, No. 4, Spring 1957, P 20.

for him and singing mournful songs.

It is accompanied by songs remembering husbands who have gone on long journeys or unfaithful lovers who have betrayed their love. It is danced in circle.¹ These days too, this dance is performed in Punjab of India.

The dress worn by dancers is lengha, shirt and dupatta. A pazeb like ornament is tied round the head.

3.2.5 KIKLI

It is danced by young girls. A pair of girls clasp hands of each other (right with right and left with left) and fall back stretching their hands. The toes are joined and they spin fast, keeping their toes close to each other. Kikli song is sung while performing this type of dance movements. While dancing Gidda, Kikli also forms part of it.

3.2.6 LUDDI

It is a dance which expresses the joy of living. It originated in the area of Attock. This is the only dance which can be danced without accompaniment. The dancers move in a circle clapping their hands and stamping one foot after the other alternately. With half turns and full turns the dancers form concave

1. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol. V, No. 4, Spring 1957, P 20.

and convex patterns round the circle.¹

This dance has a special place for evening entertainment for girls. A group of girls sit on a cot with a 'Dholak' singing; the others form a group and dance in a circle. With this dance they sing some simple ballads which reflect their joys and sorrows, hopes and aspirations.²

3.2.7 DANDAS

Dandas is primarily a dance performed by Hindu women. It is a dance with sticks. Sometimes closely related men folk also join with the women in this dance.

3.2.8 RAAS LILA

Raas Lila, as in the other parts of India, used to be prevalent in Punjab as well but now has become extinct.³

This dance-drama is based on the life of Krishna. This used to be performed in open air and at night. It was a highly chiselled and refined form of dance-drama. Mainly it depicted the exploits of Krishna and dancing of Krishna and Radha together which constituted

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1. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol. X, No. 4, Spring 1962, P 42.
 2. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol. V, No. 4, Spring 1957, P 19.
 3. Traditions of Indian Folk Dance, P 181.

Raas Lila proper. In this dance the last item used to be the prayer in which Radha and Gopies pledged their eternal devotion of Krishna.

3.2.9 KARTHI

At the time of harvesting, offerings are made to deity and Karthi is performed by men and women. This is the only mixed dance of Punjab in which both men and women take part. After making offerings to the deity at the harvest time, it is followed by women leading the procession while singing. The men follow, and then a circle is formed alternating man and woman and linking of hands. The songs sung in Karthi are sentimental and describe the battles fought and their victories as well as the quarrels and unions between the lovers and beloveds. The tempo of Karthi is slower than Bhangra and Gidda. There is also clapping of hands singly and in pairs. A folk Shehnai and other wind instruments are used in this dance.¹

3.2.10 KHATTAK

Khattak is the male dance of Pathans. It was originally a war dance and martial in nature. It was performed either in preparation of a raid or to

1. Traditions of Indian Folk Dance, P 170.

celebrate a victory. It is now danced with great fanfare during tribal festivities. It was danced around a fire. The dancers have swords or a rifle in their hands. Khattak sword dance is performed with half swings and cross-steps. Stamping the feet alternately the dancer leaps in the air. The dancer swings his sword in figure of eight round his head and shoulders. Squatting, kneeling and jumping are the characteristics of this dance.¹

Among the Pathans, only those clans who have bobbed hair dance the Khattak. Each clan has its own variety of Khattak. The main dance consists of number of variations. The dancers proceed in two columns and make a circle round the drummers and pipers who provide the music. The dancers make number of patterns and while dancing they exhibit sword play in perfect rhythm. As the dance reaches its climax the drummers and pipers also join the dance in full frenzy of rhythm and music.²

3.2.11 LAKHTAI:

This dance is performed by young Pathan boys who also give solo performances.³

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1. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol X, No 4, Spring 1962, P 41.
 2. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol V, No 4, Spring 1957, P 22.
 3. Ibid.

3.2.13 DHAREES:

Pathan girls have their own dance which is known as Dharees. It is just another variety of Jhumar.¹

3.2.14 LUGHTHI :

Lughthi is a softer form of Khattak Dance. The dancer uses handkerchieves instead of sword or rifle to show the peaceful nature of dance. It is usually danced at the time of marriage or peace when the Pathans are in a relaxed mood. The style more or less is the same as Khattak. The mood in this dance is of joy and not frenzy.²

3.2.15 GARBA:

It is a dance of men of Sindh. Whereas the Pathans dance Khattak with swords in hands, the Sindhis perform it with sticks. It is basically a Hindu dance. At the time of Holi festival the Hindus used to dance this dance after they got tired of throwing coloured water on each other. What is noteworthy is that Holi used to be a more or less a common festival and Muslim youth joined in this fun and frolic. This dance is still popular even now in the interior of Sindh.³

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1. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol V, No 4, Spring 1957, P 22.
 2. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol X, No 4, Spring 1962, P 42.
 3. Pakistan Quarterly, Vol X, No 4, Spring 1962, P 44-45.

3.2.15 DHAMAAL:

It is a religious dance performed by Hindu women to propitiate a particular Devi or Devta of their choice particularly in a temple. Moving of head and upper part of the body is the main movement. Muslim faquirs dressed in black used to dance on the tombs of pirs and it was also known as Dhamaal.

3.2.16 LANGOOR:

The Langoor dance was popular in Amritsar, Gujranwala and Lahore. It used to be performed during the Navaratri (nine days sacred to Durga) on Dussehra day, in the courtyards of Hanuman temples. This dance form is named "Langoor", on account of its association with Lord Hanuman. Issueless parents desirous of having children beseech Lord Hanuman to bless them with a son. Once the prayer is granted by the Lord, they dress up the children in colourful dresses, that is, a red silk kurta (tunic) and pyjama (trousers) decked with silver stripes. In addition, the children are made to hold a stick or a wooden mace (Gada) with a kerchief tied to its one end, in the hand. These children are made to look like langoors, as they are believed to be the members of Hanuman's monkey army (Vanar Sena) on the Dussehra day. A drummer accompanies the gaily dressed children in langoor uniforms from

their house to the Hanuman temple. In the courtyard of the temple, they dance to a set pattern of steps and to the accompaniment of the drum beat. This form of dance survives only in Amritsar.

Nothing can be said with any certainty as to the origin of Langoor dance. That it probably dates back to very ancient times is evident from the costumes and the shape of the crown.¹

DANCES ON GURU NANAK'S COMPOSITIONS:

3.2.17

KINRI, JIKRA, HINGAL AND MALDA: During the medieval period, Guru Nanak's bhajans became very popular in Punjab and were sung with extreme devotion by the women folk in Punjab. On the basis of these bhajans, Kinri, Jikra and Malda dances were composed which were devotional in nature and used to be danced by women. Poetic compositions of Baba Farid also used to be sung. It is said that Hingal Dance was composed on the poetic sayings of Baba Farid. During the medieval period this was a very popular Dance.²

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1. The Cultural Heritage of Punjab, P 82.
 2. Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itihas, P 275-276.

PART C : CLASSIFICATION OF DANCES

3.3.1 MALE, FEMALE AND MIXED DANCES: The classification of these dances is given below :-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Mixed</u>
(i)	Bhangra	Gidda	Karthi
(ii)	Gidda	Jhumar	Dandas
(iii)	Jhumar	Sammi	
(iv)	Luddi	Kikli	
(v)	Dandas	Luddi	
(vi)	Raas Lila	Dandas	
(vii)	Khattak	Dharees	
(viii)	Lakhtai	Dhamaal	
(ix)	Lughthi	Kinri	
(x)	Garba	Jikra	
(xi)	Dhamaal	Hingal	
(xii)	Langoor	Malda	

PART D : DANCE OCCASIONS AND FESTIVALS

3.4.1 OCCASIONS ON WHICH DANCES ARE PERFORMED: Broadly speaking occasions on which dances are performed in general can be classified as follows :-

- (i) Hunt dances or animal-imitation dances and food gathering.
- (ii) Dances of fertility, rites, rituals and trance dances.
- (iii) Dances which revolve around the agricultural functions which can be termed as occupational dancing of peasants.
- (iv) Dances revolving around the seasonal cycle, superimposed by dances which belong to particular festivities and festivals.
- (v) Dances and dance-dramas which revolve around themes of the epics, like Ramayana and Mahabhartta.
- (vi) Devotional dancing which is accompanied by music such as Kathas, Kirtans, Bhajans and Hari Kathas.
- (vii) Traditional dance-drama forms which can be seen in urban as well as rural areas like Raas Lilas in North India.

All these categories are not exclusive of each other but overlap and partially merge with each other.¹

3.4.2 FESTIVALS IN INDIA AND PUNJAB FROM JANUARY TO DECEMBER:

From January to December a series of festivals are held all over India and Punjab. Some are related to the sowing, others germination and yet others to harvesting.

Some mark the movement of transition of one phase of the Sun and the Moon to another, others, ascending and descending moon. The venue is determined by particular phase. The confluence of rivers is considered especially auspicious. Some of the important festivals are as follows :-

(i) The 13th or 14th January (24th day of Pausha) is celebrated all over India as Makar Sankranti. This day is Lohri in Punjab which is celebrated with dances and bonfire.

(ii) Basant Panchami falls on the 5th day of the ascending moon in Magha. In North India, it is the end of winter and the commencement of spring. It is celebrated all over India but particularly in North India.

(iii) In Phaguna (Feb-March) on the 13th day of the dark fortnight falls Shivaratri. The event is celebrated with fasting followed by festivities of music and dance.

1. Traditions of Indian Folk Dance, P 10.

(iv) On the full moon of Phaguna falls the Holi. In terms of agriculture, this is the end of one crop and the beginning of another. It is celebrated with throwing coloured water and gulal and festivities of dance and music. It provides an opportunity for equalisation of society through community participation.

(v) Ramnaumi falling on the 9th day of the bright moon of Chaitra (March-April) is celebrated as the birth day of Rama.

(vi) On twenty third day of Chaitra corresponding to 13th April is the Vaishakhi. This is the most important occasion of celebrating the harvest. In Punjab Gidda dances are performed on this day.

(vii) Vaishkha Purnima (the full moon in April) is another important day. At one level, it concludes the festivities of harvesting and at another, it is the birthday of Lord Buddha.

(viii) The full moon of Ashadha is celebrated as Guru Purnima. It is dedicated to Vayas. This day is celebrated with prayer, music and dance. On this day the Gurus particularly of dance and music receive offerings from their pupils as a mark of respect and gratitude.

(ix) On the third day of Shravana (July- August) falls Teej. It is a festival almost exclusively celebrated by women. It celebrates the commencing of rains. Girls and women sit on swings and sing. Many musical forms and dances are associated with this festival.

(x) Naga Panchmi is held on the 5th day of the bright ascending moon of Shravana (July-August). Serpant worship, floor designs and special trance dances in and around the Nagamandala are common in all parts of India.

(xi) Raksha Bandhan which falls on the full moon of Sharavana is the most important occasion in India, when the sisters tie rakhies around the wrist of their brothers. Although this festivals has not stimulated great music and dance, yet it is an important occasion in the year.

(xii) On the eighth day of the waning moon of Bhadra (August-September) falls Janamasthmi- the birth of Krishna. In all parts of India it is celebrated with music and dance. Scenes of the childhood exploits of Krishna are portrayed on this occasion.

(xiii) On the tenth day of Ashvana (September-October) falls festival of Dussehra. The entire Ramayan is sung, played, danced or presented in the form of serialised tableaux all over India on this occasion.

(xiv) The fourth day of the month of Kartika (October-November) is the fasting day of women for their husbands called Karvachauth. On the darkest night (Amavas) of Kartika, Diwali is celebrated. It is the festival of lights. Seeds are sown and cycle begins again. Maturity of autumn is celebrated through rites, rituals, music and dance.

(xv) Guru Nanak's birthday is celebrated on Kartika Purnima with great gusto.

(xvi) On 25th of December falls the Christian festival Christmas which is celebrated with great amount of gaiety, music and dance.

To these festivals, may also be added the two ids, shab-e-Barat, Moharrum, which provide certain types of musical rituals.

Man danced from the earliest times. Every occasion like rituals, simple activity of daily life, his unconcious movements while tilling, sowing, harvesting became dance, arising out of his instinctive urge of expressing himself through physical means. Originally he stood as a separate entity but slowly began to realise the advantage of community living and his every activity involved participation of other human beings. In other words he took to an organised composition in which others participated. This gave rise to folk dances from a rhythmic patterns with a set vocabulary shared by every one. This is the reason that the folk dances are the roots of our cultural heritage. Their rhythmic intricacies, the simplicity of their formation, vigour and religious fervour exhibit a wide range of forms. The form vividly reflect the past and present day living. The dance intended for conveying each idea was based on common symbols. For example most folk dances are executed in circles, where there is a complete unity and each person is connected with the other.¹

1. Creation, P 7-9.

CHAPTER IV

GURU NANAK'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS DANCE

AND

SOCIAL POLITICAL MILIEU OF HIS TIME

PART A

HISTORICAL MILIEU

- 4.1.1 Guru Nanak's Birth.
- 4.1.2 Rulers During Guru Nanak's Period.
- 4.1.3 Babar's Character.
- 4.1.4 Guru Nanak's Description of Tyranny by Invaders.

PART B

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MILIEU

- 4.2.1 Caste System.
- 4.2.2 Idolatory.
- 4.2.3 Status of Women.
- 4.2.4 Guru Nanak's Views on Hindu Society.
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- 4.3.1 Influence of Islam.
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Should be Performed.
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SOCIAL POLITICAL MILIEU OF GURU NANAK'S TIME

I am giving a brief history of Punjab during the life time of Guru Nanak to describe the socio-political conditions prevalent in those days and attitude of rulers and populace towards the art of dance.

PART 'A' - HISTORICAL MILIEU

4.1.1 GURU NANAK'S BIRTH :

In 1469, a century before Babar laid the foundation of Mughal Empire, Baba Nanak the founder of Sikhism was born in village Talvandi near Lahore, now in Pakistan.¹ At that time Bhalol Lodi ruled India. Guru Nanak belonged to the Bedi Sub-Division of Khatri Caste. The house where Guru Nanak was born, is now a place of public worship and is located at Nankana Sahib. Guru Nanak's father Kalu Chand was a Patwari. Guru Nanak lived in mortal frame for 71 years five months and five days. Some say that he lived for 60 years two months and ten days. However, it is clear that the former period is correct.²

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1. Punjab Present and Past, P 380.
Article by Ghulam Muhaydin alias Buteshah.
Philosophy of Sikhism, P 25.
 2. Punjab Present and Past, P 380.
Article by Ghulam Muhaydin alias Buteshah.

4.1.2 RULERS DURING GURU NANAK'S PERIOD:

Bhalol Khan who belonged to Afghan tribe of Lodhi and was the Governor of Lahore and Sirhind, ousted Shah Alam, the last ruler of Sayyid dynasty from power and laid the foundation of Lodhi dynasty in 1450. Ibrahim Lodhi, the grandson of Bhalol Khan was the last king of Lodhi dynasty who ruled from 1517 to 1526. The despotic rule of Ibrahim Lodhi and his attempts to weaken the power of Afghan military commanders lead to large scale unrests. The unrests reached such a climax that some feudal lords including Daulat Khan, the Governor of Punjab invited Babar to invade India for their safety. In 1526, Babar defeated Ibrahim Lodhi in the battle of Panipat and laid the foundation of Mughal Empire which was to shape the history of India for next 200 years. Rana Sangha who endeavoured to unite all Rajput territories under his rule was defeated by Babar in 1527. These two victories consolidated Babar's rule over Northern India. Babar had lead five invasions on Punjab after 1519, but the last victory in the battle of Panipat in 1526, put him on the throne of Delhi.¹

1. History of Punjab, Vol III, P 225.
By Fauja Singh.

4.1.3 BABAR'S CHARACTER:

In order to study the influence of Babar towards art, dance and music it is pertinent to describe the character of this Mughal King.

Babar was a staunch Sunni Muslim who had complete faith in God. He used to say, "nothing happens except by the will of God". He had great faith in prayer which is amply illustrated by the manner in which he took upon himself the illness of his son. He was not a religious fanatic like other orthodox Sunni rulers. However, he did not follow a liberal religious policy towards other people (non-muslims). He described in his memoirs the death of Raja Vikramjit of Gwalior and other Hindus as their going to hell. He called the war against Rana Sanga as Jihad - i.e. Holy war. He exhorted his men to fight against Rana Sanga as a religious duty. He defaced beautiful statues in the fort of Gwalior. He discriminated against Hindu traders when he abolished stamp duty for Muslim traders only. As an individual, Babar's character was exemplary. He was a dutiful son and a good friend. He believed in the essential goodness of human nature. He had all the qualities of a soldier, viz, a fine shot, horseman and a skilled swordman.¹

1. The Mughal Empire, P 34-40.

Babar was a highly educated and observant man. He was a poet possessed of a sensitive understanding of art. He was infact a great scholar and lover of fine arts. The memoires he left are written in a simple, precise language. He was fond of music and nature. However, he despised Hindus and regarded them as 'Infidels'. Though he looked down upon Hindus, yet he did not persecute them.¹

4.1.4 GURU NANAK'S DESCRIPTION OF TYRANNY BY INVADERS:

India in the 15th century and the centuries that preceded it, had been subjected to invasions of ruthless armies massacring men without mercy in the name of religion and plundering without distinction. The people of India had forsaken their spiritual heritage. There being no united action, the power to defend themselves had been lost. They wasted their stock of noble emotions in observance of endless rituals and taboos. Small independent states were at war with each other and were in no position to retain power in the face of the tyrants.²

1. A History of India Book I, P 230.

2. Prophet of the Full Moon, Guru Baba Nanak, P 9.

When Babar invaded Punjab in 1521 and subjected inhabitants of Saidpur (Eminbad) to untold tortures and atrocities, Guru Baba Nanak was a witness to the acts of deprecation committed by the Muslim raiders and wrote a lucid account of the atrocities committed by them in these words :-

"The Lord from Babar's invasion protected Khorasan,
 And on Hindustan let loose the terror.
 The Lord himself punishes not.
 So the Mughal Babar He sent down,
 Dealing death as Yama,
 As in their agony of suffering the people wailed,
 Didst Thou feel no compassion of them ?
 Listen Thou who art creator of all.
 Should a powerful foe molest one equally powerful
 Little would the mind be grieved.
 But when a ferocious tiger falls upon,
 a herd of kine,
 Then must the master be called to account.
 These dogs that despoiled the Jewels,
 and wasted them
 Now, in their death none shall remember them.¹

1. Translation by Gurbachan Singh Talib of
 Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Vol II, P 769.

PART B SOCIO-POLITICAL MILIEU.

4.2.1 CASTE SYSTEM:

Hindu society was caste ridden and was divided into four castes (Brahmins, Khastriyas, Vaish and Sudras). Brahmins had the privilege and preserve to perform all types of ceremonies. No ceremony, whether it be regarding birth, marriage or death could be performed without associating a brahmin who would perform ceremonies with recitation of some vedic hymns. Temples were exclusively manned by brahmins. Sudras had no right to enter temples or to recite hymns from holy scriptures.¹ They were untouchables and lived doing menial work for the high castes.

4.2.2 IDOLATORY:

Idolatory was entirely unknown during the vedic times,² however during the later periods and right till date, is a common feature among Hindus. The extent of prevalence of idolatory can be visualised from the writings of MA Sherring who estimated that the city of Banaras contained 1454 temples and that:-

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1. Sikh Gurus and Indian Spiritual Thought, P 42.
 2. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol VII, P 142.

"the number of idols actually worshiped by the people certainly exceeds the number of people themselves, though multiplied twice over, it cannot be less than half a million and may be more. 'Idolatory' he adds "is a charm, a fascination to Hindu. It is the food of his soul. It is the foundation of his hope, both for this world and another. ('The sacred city of Hindus', London 1868, P 41).¹

Baba Nanak was averse to idolatory. He described idolatory in the following terms at Page 556 of S.G.G.S. "The Hindus, straying in abysmal forgetfulness have followed the wrong path. As Narda (The Sage) taught so they worship (idols), blind and dumb (they walk) in pitch darkness, worshipping this ridiculous stone which they have set up. It sinks so how can it carry you across (the ocean of existence)?"²

4.2.3 STATUS OF WOMEN:

Paradoxically, the Hindus have always looked downed upon their women. Manu declared "Day and night women must be kept in subordination to the males of the family : in childhood to the father, in youth to her husband, in old age to her sons."³

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1. Sikh Gurus and Indian Spiritual Thought, P 42.
 2. S.G.G.S., P 556.
 3. Facets of Guru Nanaks Thoughts, P 121.

Thus in Hindus, notorious subordination of woman seems to be entirely due to law givers. Shri D.P. Mukherji in his book 'Modern Culture' states that "Hindu woman religiously is a sudra and is not entitled to the Gayatri Mantra" : Thus a man cannot eat with his wife since she has sudra status even if she is born of Brahmin parents. According to Digambra Jains, women can never attain salvation except by being born again as man. Again it is also held in orthodox Hindus that a Hindu woman is not supposed to walk by the side of her husband. She must remain a few paces behind him. It is also held by the orthodox that if she touches a consecrated image, the divinity of image is also destroyed and it is rendered useless.¹

In medieval India, woman was not treated well. Sant Tulsi Das placed woman at par with a beast and a Shudra. Bhagat Kabir regarded woman as living picture of lust and sexual gratification. He further says that under her shadow a snake becomes blind and that the man who daily keeps her company must fare even worst. She was sold in child marriage, condemned to miserable widowhood.² On the death of her husband she was forced to alight his funeral pyre

1. Facets of Guru Nanaks Thoughts, P 121.

2. Ibid, P 127.

and commit 'Sati'. The women were the worst sufferers at the time of every invasion as they were carried away by victors as herd of cattle.

Philosophers, teachers and religious leaders have held different views about women. However, it was only Guru Nanak who has bestowed on women full equality in religious, social political and practical life. He regarded man and woman as offspring of God and considered them equal.¹ According to Baba Nanak, if there is any special achievement of the whole world, it is only woman, for it is from woman that one learns the lesson of love. For this very reason Guru Nanak has preached in 'Asa Di Var' to sing the praises of woman everyday. The whole poetry of Guru Nanak is replete with a woman's feelings, emotions and experiences. God has been addressed with the epithets of 'husband', 'friend', 'companion' and 'beloved'. This is so because it is only woman who can show true love and affection and who exhibiting her love cravings can please her husband - God. Guru Nanak mentions about innumerable other qualities of woman as she possesses love, obedience, self sacrifice, grace, tenderness and refinement.²

1. Facets of Guru Nanaks Thoughts, P 124.

2. Ibid, P 125.

4.2.4 GURU NANAK'S VIEWS ON HINDU SOCIETY:

It may be stated that deceit, corruption and tyranny was the order of the day and hypocrisy was rampant. As in 'Asa di Var', Guru Nanak lucidly drew the picture of prevailing malady in the society stating :-

" You perform Hindu worship in your house but you read the religious books (Holy Quran etc) of the Mohammedans (in public) and you adopt their customs. O! brother, leave this hypocrisy, you can swim across the world ocean (only) by repeating God's name".¹

4.2.5 STATUS OF HINDUS DURING MUSLIM RULE:

During the sultanates, Muslims had a better status than Hindus. Even Hindu converts to Islam were looked down upon and addressed as 'Rasil' which means a person of low status. They were not given any responsible posts. Hindus were called Kafers (Idol worshipers) and enjoyed no sympathy from Muslims. Hindus were treated as second class subjects called Zimmi. However, Hindus because of their numerical strength were allowed to run and manage village panchayats. This was because Turkish Sultans did not have sufficient resources to take the management of village in their own hands.²

1. Asa Divar, P 11.

2. History of the Punjab, Vol III By Fauja Singh, P 6.

As the way to Delhi for the foreign invaders lay through Punjab, the people of this province were the biggest sufferers. Afghans, Turks and other muslim dynasties ruled Northern India through their military strength. They exploited the people and fleeced them and imposed Jazia Kar (personal Tax) on non-muslims. Hindu temples were demolished and mosques built in their place. It is said that in Dera Ghazi Khan district a Hindu could ride a donkey only, there was great gulf between Hindu and Muslim population, which was the creation of the rulers of those times. Capital punishment was imposed for any criticism of Islam. Bodhan Brahmin was put to death by Sikander Lodhi (1488-1517) for just stating that Hinduism was as good a religion as Islam. Forcible conversion of Hindus was not infrequent.¹

Sikandar Lodhi was a persecutor of Hindus. According to Tarikh-Daudi, 'he utterly destroyed diverse places of worship of infidels and left out a vestige remaining of them'.²

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1. Guru Nanak, His Life, Time and Teaching, P 28.
 2. Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, P 43.

In such an inhospitable atmosphere Baba Nanak passed the first three decades of his life. The next two decades were spent by him visiting various parts of India and outside the country, thus cutting him off from the intolerance of Lodhi regime.¹

1. Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, P 43.

PART C : RELIGIOUS MILIEU

4.3.1 INFLUENCE OF ISLAM:

Islam started to penetrate Sind in the seventh century and other parts of Northern India in ninth century.¹ However, it was on formation of Delhi Sultanate towards the end of 12th century (defeat of Prithviraj by Muhammed Ghuri)² that Islam was made the state religion and forced upon the local population. A part of Hindu population adopted Islam; some under force, some due to the privileges it extended (Only muslims could hold prominent posts) and some in order not to pay jaziya or toll tax levied on non-muslims. A large number of lower castes converted to Islam so as to avoid disadvantages associated with their status.³

Muslim scholars and poets from other countries also came to India and were given a place of respect in the darbars of Sultans. Over a period of time there was substantial increase in muslim population

1. A History of India Book I, P 224.

2. Ibid, P 203.

3. Ibid, P 224.

and in some areas muslims became to be in majority. . . . Even though the ruling class comprised of only Muslims (Officers and soldiers in the Army, Governors and other prominent officials), a large chunk of the population remained Hindus (tax-collectors, merchants and money lenders, and by and large the entire peasant class).¹

Despite fierce clashes between the Hindus and Muslims, their long co-existence within the same country led to mutual influence in shaping beliefs and customs. Even during the reign of Sikandar Lodhi, a fanatic Muslim, who made it a point to destroy all Hindu temples and was most severe in his treatment towards non-muslims, the cultural intercourse between the two religious traditions continued. Sanskrit classics were translated into Persian. A famous work produced was Mian Bhuva's 'Tibb-Sikandri'; a medical treatise based on ancient Hindu medical system. The first work on Indian music in Persian was also produced during this period. It was called 'Lahjat-i-Sikandar Shahi'. As a result of contact between Persian and Lahori (from Lahore) which was the then prevalent form of Punjabi, a new language known as 'Hindwi, combining the vocabulary of both languages took

1. A History of India Book I, P 224.

shape. Amir Khusrau wrote verses in Hindwi. By the fusion of Indian and Persian system of music evolved new common forms and melodies. Some of these are attributed to Amir Khusrau who is credited with being the originator of 'Khayal'. He invented 'ghazal' and 'qawali' and the instrument 'sitar' which represented a combination of the Indian 'Veena' and Iranian 'Tambur'.¹

Similarly, in many spheres the Hindu and Muslim ways of life were influenced by each other. The Turkish dress consisting of Shalwar, tight gown (quba), loose outer robe (Jbbah) and turban became a common dress of Muslims and Hindus of upper class.² The colour of dress worn by all people during the rule of Turks and Pathan was blue.³

The Muslims adopted some aspects of Yoga philosophy and started participating in Hindu festivals. They started celebrating Shab-i-Barat in the style as Hindus celebrated Shivratri by keeping awake during the night and using fire works. Bringing out of Taziyas was reminiscent of the Hindu ceremonial procession in a chariot of Jagnath. This annual ritual was unknown in any other country.⁴

1. Guru Nanak and Origin of Sikh Faith, P 48.

2. Ibid.

3. Asa Di Var, By Harbans Singh Boabia, P 94.

4. Guru Nanak and Origin of Sikh Faith, P 46-48.

The Hindus came under the influence of muslim idea of brotherhood, the way of life followed by Sufi orders and then teachings concerning the existence of various paths to be followed to achieve union with God.

4.3.2. SUFISM:

Sufism is essentially a mystical system akin to the devotional mysticism of the saints of India. It is basically a part of Islam. It is said by the scholars that the word 'sufi' is derived from Safa (Purity). Sufi is one who is free from all the impurities of the worldly life. These days the scholars use the term sufism in the sense of Mohamadan mysticism. But Indian sufism is not purely of mohamadan origin. Some learned people believe that Indian sufism was deeply influenced by 'vedantam'. The sufi saints liked devotional music which is accompanied by musical instruments.¹

The prominent Sufi saints of that period were Nizam-ud-din Auliya (dt 1325) who was known for his tolerance to Hindus and the high moral principles he demanded of his followers : Sharaf-ud-din Ahmed Manery, who wrote his epistles in the mid fourteenth century wherein he advocated

1. History of Punjab, P 307-310.

tolerance with regard to the Hindu Customs which had penetrated Muslim circle. He demanded that the spiritual leaders must renounce the worldly comforts. Faridud-din-Ganj-Shakar (1175-1265) was a very popular saint. He translated into Hindi the mystical dictums upheld by the sufis of his order, who by their dances and recitals of holy songs brought themselves to a state of ecstasy. Faridud-din was known to be an extremely gentle and a human person. It was he who used to say "The needle is better than the knife," for the needle sews together, while the knife rends asunder" Hymns attributed to him have been preserved in the sacred writings of sikhs known as 'Adi Granth'.¹

4.3.3 BHAKTI MOVEMENT :

The reapproachment between Hindu and Islamic ideas became more marked in the later stage of Bhakti movement. This movement was undertaken by Guru Nanak against the contemporary order. It provided an outlet for discontent with and opposition to the ruling class. The movement propagated the idea of one God, devotion to whom was within the reach of any man of whatever caste or faith. Guru Nanak's Bhakti movement proclaimed equality and a protest against those in power as well as

1. A History of India, Book I, P 225.

privileged positions enjoyed by Hindu and Muslim religious leaders. Even though a Hindu movement, the spiritual leader of Bhakti movement addressed to both Hindus and Muslims. They expounded their teachings in the form of hymns in various local languages. The hymns were sung to popular tunes thus spreading the Bhakti idea among vast portion of the population. These hymns frequently became popular folk songs. Another saint, by the name of Sant Kabir, (1380-1414) who was a weaver by profession enjoyed the greatest influence within the Bhakti movement. He sang his songs in Brij bhasa which formed the basis of modern Hindi. Kabir preached that God was within the man's heart and was in both Rama and Allah.

Baba Nanak resolutely criticised the inequalities stemming from the caste system and demanded from his followers that they eat together regardless of caste differences. He propagated promotion of welfare of fellow beings. Thus Bhakti was the most accepted spiritual institution which transformed itself into a movement at the hands of Guru Nanak.

Chaitanaya (1486-1534) from Bengal linked in one faith the principle of Bhakti and the Vaishnavite cult of Krishna. He also did not believe in the caste system and had number of Muslims as his followers. Chaitnya used to rouse in himself and his followers

a state of ecstasy by using ritual processions and singing of love songs. He preached that through Bhakti alone one can attain the supreme Lord.¹

4.3 4 GURU NANAK'S TEACHINGS:

The mul mantra in Jap Ji Sahib, gives the picture of God which should be the aim of man's life to achieve. The mul mantra starts with 'EK Omkar' meaning thereby that there is one and only one God. It further describes the various attributes of the Divine. Baba Nanak says "He is eternal, He was, He is, and He will be. He is fearless, revengeless, with enmity to no one, changeless, unborn, and undying. He is enlightner to be known and realised by the grace of Guru (The divinely gifted teacher)".

According to Baba Nanak, "He is the life of all life. He created the earth and heaven and sustains them at all times. He rules the universe by His supreme will and every one has to surrender to His will. He is the supreme ruler of the world and listens to the sincere prayers of his devotees and protects them. To be one with God is the goal of the soul. He is present in our hearts but we can only know Him by the grace of Guru."²

1. A History of India Book I, P 224-225.

2. Guru Nanak Dev 'Life and Teachings', P 314-315.

Man has to develop the latent divine nature within Him so that he may become one with God. The aim of human life is the attainment of that blissful union. The man is hampered in this task because he is caught in whirlpool of passions and base desires born out of worldly attachments and allurements. The result is that the lower-self overpowers and egoism shuts out the divine light. A time comes when some catastrophe befalls him and man is filled with fear for his safety. Traditionally speaking, when he finds himself utterly helpless, he realises that he is in the hands of a mysterious superpower who is moulding the course of events. This fear is the beginning of wisdom because it rescues man from his own clutches and makes him listen to the voice of his higher self, turning him towards God, who is all powerful and merciful. Baba Nanak highlighted the brighter aspect of suffering-pain that purifies the mind. In Asa Di Var, P 469, he says, "Suffering is turned medicine, the pleasure, the melody; where pleasure is, devotion is not, thou the creator, no power to do anything have I".¹

Prof Kartar Singh in his book Guru Nanak Dev, Life and Teachings writes, "Indeed, Guru Nanak says again and again that without the fear of Lord, Love for Him cannot arise and grow in the heart of man. Be it remembered, however that this fear is not a depressing, deadening, benumbing repelling sentiment but

1. Translation of Guru Granth Sahib By p 995.
Gurbachan Singh Talib,

one which fills man with a longing to run to the bosom of the Queller of all fear, the Almighty father who alone can give him every protection. Reverence and awe are the chief components of this fear. They lead to love. Ultimately all fear disappears. Love becomes all in all. Love fills him through and through. All evil then departs from his heart. No evil can now touch him. By meditating on Hari, by living in total union with Him, the devotee becomes Hari, no difference, no distance, and no separateness are left. The two become one. Man becomes as powerful as God, but also as full of divine pity, sympathy, love and compassion, as the Beloved Lord. In fact, he thinks not of the power that union with the Almighty gives him, but only of the duty of love towards his fellow creatures which that union entails. He can sin no more".¹

Guru Nanak laid emphasis on the strict observance of the following :-

- (a) To live by ones own honest earning.
- (b) Nam or singing the praise of God.
- (c) To share with the needy.
- (d) Ashnan or daily bath to keep the body clean.
- (e) Seva or service of humanity.
- (f) Simran or constant prayer for the deliverance of soul.²

1. Guru Nanak Dev, Life and Teaching, p 317.

2. Guru Nanak - The Prophet of People, P 9.

PART 'D' : POSITION OF DANCE DURING
PRE-GURU NANAK PERIOD

4.4.1 EPIC PERIOD:

In traditional Indian performing arts there does not exist a very great difference between music and dance. The art of dance is basically a musical one. Ramayana and Mahabharata are the greatest war poems of the country. In these works there are references to dance, song and instrumental music in almost every section. Music was specially respected in the period of Ramayana. When Rama organised 'Asvamedha Yajna', there is reference to singing of Ramayana in 'Swar and 'Tal' for which skilled musicians were invited.¹

4.4.2 GUPTA PERIOD 320 AD - 600 AD:

Gupta period which is known as the golden age, the arts flourished and reached the pinnacle of glory. There was exchange of culture with foreign countries, since the percussion instruments were highly propagated, the art of dance with full fledged 'tala' reached the zenith of progress during this period.²

1. Indian Concept of Rhythm, P 3.

2. Ibid, P 6-7.

4.4.3 REIGN OF HARSHAVARDHANA (606 AD-647 AD):

King Harshavardhana himself was an accomplished playwright and musician with full knowledge of ragas and riginis' with appropriate rhythm pattern. The king patronised musicians and artists and the currents of Indian music flowed into foreign lands.

4.4.4 647 AD - 1000 AD:

During this period annexation of kingdoms, warfare, disunity among the Rajput princes due to their greed led to great unrest and in security. The position of music suffered a great set back under these conditions.¹

4.4.5 MUSLIM PERIOD:

Though Natya sastra of Bharata was composed during the period of Mohhammad Gazni, however the status of music specially Hindu music had a downfall with the coming in of the Muslims to India. The status of music during the rule of prominent dynasties is given below.²

4.4.6 TUGHLAK DYNASTY (1320 AD TO 1412 AD). Music flourished during the period of Gayasuddin Tughlak and his son Mohammad Tughlak both were its patronisers. There were music concerts in which artists from all communities were encouraged to perform. Muslim women had a great

1. Indian Concept of Rhythm, P 7.

2. Ibid, P 7 and 8.

love for music, however the purdah system had an adverse influence on them. Since the rulers were Muslims, popular songs were composed in 'Gazal'. 'Qawali', 'Dadra' etc with new patterns of rhythm, especially for percussion instruments.¹

4.4.7 LODHI DYNASTY. The rulers of this dynasty encouraged development of art and music. There were number of muslim artists of repute who worked assiduously in the field of music duly assisted by Hindu artists. The muslim artists who had brought the Arabian culture with them attempted to mix it with the Indian music so as to totally predominate it. However, in order to preserve the core of the ancient traditions of Indian music, the Hindu artists resisted such attempts. During this period, 'Khayal', 'Qawali', 'Gazal', 'Thumari' etc became popular styles of group singing. For maintaining the tempo of group singing large sized dholaks and drums were prepared. New dances depicting stories from Arabia and Iran were composed. The romantic dances were very popular amongst the common folk including Hindus. The Arabian and Iranian culture was also presented in these dances. Hindus, though dazed to witness these dances, yet very much liked the intoxicating

1. Indian Concept of Rhythm, P 8.

atmosphere .generated by them. Sikander Lodhi (Son of Balhol Lodhi) appreciated Indian music. Though he himself had no knowledge of music yet he used to respect the artists and Indian music made considerable progress during his reign. New gazals and Khayals were composed and new books on music were written.¹

4.4.8 BABAR'S REIGN. Babar was a great musician and a proficient singer. He respected both musicians and singers. He believed that music had tremendous power and effect. During the battle of Panipat, his war music was sensational. Dances also progressed during this period. However, Babar despised Indian dances, the reason probably being that neither he could understand these nor had adequate time to study these intimately. Babar was extremely fond of Arabian and Turkish dances. Khayal and qawali were very popular during this period. Romantic songs were sung for the warriors returning to their camps after a long day's battle. They were given such a doze of romantic music that their tiredness vanished in no time.²

4.4.9 HUMAYUN'S REIGN. Hummayun held musicians in great esteem. He was fond of songs with themes close to daily life as well as those sung in praise of God. He was devoted to songs depicting sublime love of humanity and would

1. Indian Concept of Rhythm, P 8.

. Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itahas, P 192-193.

2. Ibid, P 194-195.

listen to these songs with great concentration. Humayun was very fond of music till his death. It can be stated that if he had spare time he would have definitely contributed immensely towards the field of art.¹

4.4.10 GURU NANAK'S PREACHINGS THROUGH MUSIC:

Guru Nanak preached through the medium of song and dance. The standard of music which had considerably deteriorated in Punjab under the Muslim Rule was boosted by Guru Nanak by singing the praise of God through bhajans.

Dr. Trilochan Singh in his book 'Guru Nanak's Religion - A comparative study of Religion', writes, "Guru Nanak, who called himself a bard, composed his hymns in 19 ragas (musical modes), accepted the fact that spiritual life expresses itself in art, poetry, philosophy, music and the symbolism of beauty but he emphasised that religion is the highest faculty. It is the stage in which all sides of our consciousness are represented. Although art, poetry, music and philosophy by themselves cannot help man to acquire perfection of the mind and spirit, however, those religions which ignore these remain cut off from the spirit of Truth and the light of 'God'".² Guru Nanak in his compositions

1. Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itahas, P 198-199.

2. Guru Nanak' Religion - A comparative Study of Religion, P 82.

described music as a means of attaining temporal happiness and spiritual joy.¹ It is for this reason that he used to sing hymns composed by himself with the accompaniment of Rabab played by Mardana who was his constant companion as well as an ardent devotee and disciple.

Baba Nanak professed that the intensity of love towards God must be increased by all means. This will assist in reducing 'ego' in man and enable the love towards God' grow in him. In order to increase the love of God, His praise should be sung, as it is through music that the soul is lifted into a mystic union with God. The devotee forgets his physical barrier and surrenders himself to God. When the music softens the mind, the ego is destroyed and one feels approaching God and realization of 'Nam'. While in Baghdad when Guru Nanak and his party used to sing the praise of God every morning, this was objected to by Pir Dastgir, as music is prohibited in Islamic law. Pir Dastgir occupied an important spiritual position. He himself went to Baba Nanak to argue against this practice. The following dialogue between the Pir and Baba Nanak will throw light on the high esteems in which Baba Nanak held the art of music.

1. Guru Nanak - His Life, Time and Teachings, p. 249.

Pir : Music makes a man's mind mercurial and wayward. It diverts man's mind towards vice.

Baba Nanak : Music does not make a man mercurial. On the other hand it helps in concentration. On hearing music, the mind is softened. It melts the heart and makes it compassionate and loving and such a mind can be given any desired shape. Music produces emotions in men and inspires him to do noble actions. It also purifies cravings.

Pir : Has God made music ?

Baba Nanak : Yes, it is a gift of God. Man has not made it but has discovered it.

Pir : Rabab, Sitar and other musical instruments have been made by man, without them there can be no music.

Baba Nanak : Nature is full of music. There is music in flow of water and the waves of the sea. Birds sing sweet notes, sound coming out of man's throat produces music. Ears have been made to appreciate music.

Pir : Music has added to the indulgence of men. It resides in the houses of immoral people. It has produced beggars and prostitutes.

Baba Nanak : It is not the fault of music. It possesses immense power of changing the attitude of men. Even poisonous snakes are enchanted by it. Pure and wordless music is the inner voice of man. Ideas are expressed by language but emotions are expressed by music. Emotions expressed in music combined with ideas given in language make a potent force. Some people have degraded music by mixing evil ideas with it through foul language. However, others have elevated it by putting good ideas in it. Romantic poetry is example of the first and the scriptures are the instance of the second. The islamic law prohibits first kind of music and not the second. The defect, therefore, lies in the language mixed with it and not the music. It is the cloth that is undesirable and not the pearl. Don't you praise, admire and adore God.

Pir : Yes, we do, That is the chief characteristic of our religion.

Baba Nanak : Admiration is of three types :-

(i) We can admire God by thinking about God and concentrating on His attributes.

(ii) We admire God through words and speech.

(iii) We sing the attributes of God and come into emotion.

Third method is the best.

Pir : Can't we do without music ?

Baba Nanak : Music is inevitable. It bursts out of man like a fountain. It cannot be stopped. It is spontaneous. Everybody in the world sings. The farmer sings at the handle of plough, the sailor at the oars, the labourer at his action, the girl at the spinning wheel. All sing when they are in mood to sing, if singing is a must then why not sing, what is good and that elevates the man and brings him nearer to God. If you do not sing the praise of God, then the music will be used by people for bad purpose.¹

1. Heritage of Sikh Culture, p 230-232.

4.4.11 IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC IN THE HYMNS OF BABA NANAK:

At page 347 of S.G.G.S. Guru Nanak in his hymn in Raga Asa has highlighted the importance of singing in praise of the Lord. He states that there should be no house where hymns are not sung in praise of God. The first line of the above mentioned hymn presents this idea which is further explained in the rest of succeeding lines. Our main interest lies in the fact that Guru Nanak considers music and its dimensions as a media valid only for the appreciation of God. He feels that God's appreciation should begin with the playing on musical instruments. Unlimited musical instruments are being played upon his appreciation innumerable ragas tell about the glory of the God. In the fourth line Guru Nanak directly links music with devotional singing and pens down that air, water, fire, dharamraj, chitragupta, shiva, rudra, brahma and many more divinities and ascetics sing in the honour of Lord. Guru Nanak feels that music plays an integral part in devotion to God. Both music as well as devotion to God need a particular type of concentration, inspiration and faith. Another significant point in this hymn is that even abstract things such as water, fire and air are also included in this process of singing. This indicates that Guru Nanak consider singing not only

as rhythmic, sounds uttered by human beings but also finds its deep relationship with metaphysical world. It seems as if it is important to be musical to attain metaphysical from physical world. So music is a media for the attainment of God. We conclude with the following from this explanation :-

- (i) Music is an inseparable part of Guru Nanak's conceptual world.
- (ii) Music is a very important media for the glorification of God.
- (iii) The influence of music is desired only in sublime and spiritual yearning.
- (iv) The music was an integral part of Guru Nanak's devotion to God.

4.4.12 RELATIONSHIP OF MUSIC AND DANCE:

There is a region beyond verbal meaning into which music directly and immediately transports us. One can say that the impact of the 'word' is mediate while that of 'music' is immediate.¹

If music accompanies dance and both of them are used to depict a certain feeling or music fills up the gap where the movements and gestures used in dance

1. Indian Musical Traditions, P 6.

fail to narrate a particular emotion. Music provides life to dance and is an indispensable partner of the dance. Similarly where music lacks to convey a particular thought or emotion, the dancer's gestures fill up the gap. In this way dance and music are complementary to each other. Moreover, dance being interpretive, it strives to portray in movements, what the music and songs describe in sounds.

Shri C.P. Khanna in his article titled 'Steps with Indian dance' writes, "The dramatic truth is that India has always danced. It's dance is the embodiment of a whole gamut of Indian expression in all its richness and subtlety in all its extraordinary fantasy and Yogic discipline".¹

The spiritual values like devotion to God, surrender to His will and seeking indentity with Him and other spiritual aspirations of human mind are very well represented through poetry, dance and music.² Though Guru Nanak is his hymns has not used the present days coined word 'folk dance', yet he has made numerous references to dance.

1. Aryan Heritage Vol VIII, March 1991 No 82
A link Magazine and Cultural Digest, P 30.

2 Reading on Music and Dance, P 29.

PART E : DANCE - A UNIVERSAL URGE

4.5.1 DANCE AND NATURE:

Dance is the rhythmical physical movements prompted by inner feelings and emotions. The rhythmical movement is also spontaneous in many animals as in the case of human beings. The peacock dances to clouds in rainy season, elephant dances to attract his mate, the snake and bear dance to music. In fact, every human being and animal dances to express his inner most passions. It can be said that there is natural instinct to dance in every living being. Savages and aboriginal tribes in various parts of the world also dance to express their inner feelings.¹

Shri Goswami in his article published in the journal "Sangeet Kala Vihar" Oct-Dec 1970, Page 2 writes:-

"Dance has been a popular and cultural form of physical exercise-cum-entertainment from the very beginning when man came to dwell on the earth. It can be traced through thousands of years of the country's history, changing in form and technique now and then to suit the demands of time and tastes of people of various epochs".²

1. Art of Indian Dancing, P 7.

2. Journal Sangeet Kala Vihar, Oct-Dec 1970, P 2.

According to Indian thought, origin of everything is associated with mythological sources which are in one way or the other manifestation of supreme energy or say mahashakti. From the energy arises rhythm. Movement creates friction giving rise to sound. The birth of man and nature is closely connected with each other (Pursha and Prakrti).¹

The nature has inspired man to the noblest ideals and caused him to worship its forces since the very inception of history of man kind when the ancient thinkers could not give a rational or satisfactory explanation of the forces and powers superior to mankind, they personified these as Gods or Goddesses with certain attributes. For example when they could not find an answer of the source which provided them with air, water and light, they personified them as different Gods viz, Pavana (god of wind), Varuna (god of rain) and Surya Deva (Sun god). Likewise it is said that sound was created by damru of god Shiva and dance emanated from his cosmic movements.²

Shiva is believed to have danced to create the world. He gave regular rhythm to the universe, movement of the sun, moon and the stars and circulation of four

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1. Kathak Dance Through Ages, P 2.
 2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 1.

seasons. He created the new rhythm by his body movement. Still more, the world was created by his dancing expressed by his great poses which symbolized the evolution, preservation and destruction. Shiva is thought of as a king of dance, Natraja and his consort Parvati is also thought as a pioneer of dances.¹

Dance consists of artistic expression, tone and time or rhythm, and every form of natural or human activity may have something to contribute towards its making. Every action to it implies some form of emotion and is usually accompanied by some kind of sound.²

4.5.2 GURU NANAK'S VIEWS ON DANCE IN NATURE:

According to Guru Nanak, God is present in nature and Nature depends upon His will. In Asa Di Var Baba Nanak says that God, Himself creates the world and himself gave names to things. He Himself created nature by His power and while seated in nature He watches with delight what He created.³ According to him the spirit of God is continuously present in nature. Nature is dependent upon His will. Nature and human beings

1. Dances of Asia, P 22.

2. Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itihas, P 16.

3. S.G.G.S., P 463.

depend on Him but he does not depend on men or the nature. In other words, God is the indwelling spirit of creation, Guru exhibited great awe and praise for the work of almighty in creating the nature. He says:-

Wondrous Thy Word, Wonderful Their knowledge;
 Wondrous Thy creatures, Wonderful their species;
 Wondrous their forms Wonderful their colours;
 Wondrous the animals which wander naked;
 Wondrous Thy Wind, Wonderful Thy water;
 Wondrous Thy fire which sporteth wonderously;
 Wondrous the earth, wonderful the sources of
 Production;
 Wondrous the pleasure to which mortals are attached;
 Wondrous is meeting; wonderful parting from Thee;
 Wondrous is hunger, wonderful repletion;
 Wondrous Thy praises, wonderful Thy eulogies,
 Wondrous the desert, wonderful the road;
 Wondrous Thy nearness, wonderful Thy remoteness;
 Wondrous to behold thee: present
 Beholding these wonderful things
 I remain wondering
 Nanak, they who understand
 Them are supremely fortunate.¹

1. The Sikh Religion, P 221.
 (Translation by Macauliffe)

The nature is bound by rhythm and a rhythmic movement is termed dance. Therefore virtually everything in the universe dances. This thought is echoed in the verse at Page 456 of S.G.G.S., by Guru Nanak where in he says as follows :-

" Innumerable whirl winds, tops, churning rods,
grain treaders, the winged creatures wheeling
without pause,

Living being whirled on the pike. All these
whirl about;

endless in their enumeration.

All bound in hands of their deeds are whirling
along enacting a kind of dance".¹

This shows Baba Nanak was of the view that dance is an inseparable adjunct of all animate and inanimate objects. Obviously who was lover of nature upto such an grteat extent, could not be averse to dance which is inherent in nature. He was only opposed to particular types of dances which had base elements in them and not to those dance movements which are the result of exalted state of feelings arising out of the love for the Supreme being. When a man feels happy, he exhibits his innermost feeling through rhythmic movements which

1. Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Vol II, Translated
by Gurubachan Singh Talib, P 986.

take the form of dance. These movements differ according to way of life, occupation and customs, forming the folk dance of different places in a country. Thus Baba Nanak could not be averse to dance which is the innermost urge of human beings. When he finds that every part and nature is dancing on the tune provided by the Creator, that is God, however he was against certain indecencies in dance which I will discuss in subsequent pages.

PART 'F' : TYPES OF DANCES

4.6.1 RITUAL DANCE:

Performance of rituals has a particular purpose or end in view. The ritual dances are primarily meant for propitiation of a diety or dieties. Before discussing ritual dances, it is pertinent to first describe what are rituals and their connected aspects.

4.6.2 WHAT ARE RITUALS? In the layman's language ritual can be defined as the routine of worship. However, the term has larger connotations, that is to say, ritual is an essential part of worship and it is not possible to carry out religious worship without associating some aspects of a ritual. It can be stated that ritual is to religion what habit is to life and its functions are therefore similar. It brings subordinate functions under an effortless rule to permit undivided attention regarding major issues. The main task of routine in religion is to organise the daily activities for its stability and continuance as a social institution so that all available spontaneity and initiative may be directed into spiritual channels.¹

From time immemorial, rituals have had a deep significance on religious consciousness. The procedures of rituals have become deeply enmeshed in

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol 9, P 322 B.

the religious acts, and have thus become an integral part of these acts.¹

There are two aspects of a ritual. First one is that, it goes beyond something more than performing a normal prayer which implies that the individual expresses the desire, hope or expectation of divine favour from a particular deity and consumation sought with the deity is taken for granted. When the act of worship has been performed, the deity is expected to communicate its blessings and grant accomplishment of the desire of the worshipper. The second aspect of the ritual is the identification of the act of worship (the process of performing the ritual), in that the worshipper gets so involved that his body and the act of worship become one.²

According to Longwell "Ritual is preserved because it preserves luck" Since a ritual has inherent sacredness associated with it, therefore it is but natural to associate a sepecific god with the origin of a particular ritual. Whenever, there is an ommission or innovation in the performance of a ritual, these are supposed to be punished by the particular God by withdrawing blessings or perpetrating a disaster on the community. It can be stated that in the

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol 9, P 322B-323.

2. Ibid, P 323.

primitive society, there is no custom to which sacredness is not attached to some degree, however it is seen that more ceremonial and sacred the usage, the religious conservatism accordingly becomes more rigid. It is believed that in olden days in Australia, despite availability of stone implements, fire sticks were employed to conduct the highly sacred ceremony of circumcision. Subsequently, even in higher cultures also, this operation was executed by stone implements even though iron implements were already in common use.¹

4.6.3 INTERPRETATION OF RITUAL. According to W Robertson Smith (Religion of Semites), in primitive religion, it is ritual that generates and sustains myth, sacred lore of course cannot be dispensed with. The typical example is the Australian aboriginal society. The society has just reached the stage of having a priest but it still needs its OKINRABATA or greater instructor. Even though the sole task of this expert is to merely hand in the rules for the performance of religious rites. If sacred history happens to be associated with the lore of that person, he is considered divine and exercises full control on the conduct of the ritual. It is seen that even in the highest religious cultures where orthodoxy holds a prominent place, rituals are

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol 9, P 323.

held merely to symbolise dogma and there is a remarkable rigidity about the dogma. This is mainly due to its association with ritual forms, many of them bearing the most primeval stamp.¹ Regarding the symbolic interpretation of ritual, this is held not to be primitive, and it is true that unreflective age is hardly aware of the difference between "Outward sign" and "inward meaning", and thinks as it were by means of its eyes.²

4.6.4 CHANGES IN RITUALS. While rituals are highly stable, their nature is not absolutely rigid. Over a period of time, a ritual grows, alters and finally decays. All tribes have an elaborate body of magic-religious rites, however there may be exceptions wherein the disturbance of tradition has taken place due to migration or some similar reason. Thus the growth or evolution of a ritual takes place according to a pre-existing pattern. In primitive times, unconscious evolution has been a more active factor, thus small variations over a period of time bring about a considerable change.³

The individual religious genius exercises a large influence. A man of a more original turns of

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol 9, P 323.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

mind than his fellows will claim to have had a new ceremony imparted to him by the soul in a vision, and such a ceremony will even be adopted by another tribe which has no notion of its meaning. Meanwhile, since little is dropped while so much is being added the result is an endless complication and elaboration of ritual.¹

4.6.5 RITUALISM AMONG HINDUS. Ritualism is a prescribed order for performing religious or devotional service and is prevalent among Hindus. A common ritual is the practice of pouring five holy liquids (Panchamatra milk and butter, sugar, honey) over the image and dropping cold water on it from a perforated pot. Thereafter, the goddess is dressed and ornamented with coloured powder and incense burnt. All this takes place among chanting of mantras by brahmins. The washing of idols, then feeding at various times of the day including the sacrifices performed by the Gurkhas at Dussehra festival (during Durga Puja) are examples of ritual.²

4.6.6 RITUAL DANCES. Ritual dances are mentioned in Vedas also. During olden days, in Mahavrata ceremony, women danced to celebrate the occasion. Maidens danced around the fire with water pitchers on their heads alongwith recitation of slokas. Water was then poured on the fire which was an act of sympathetic magic

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol 9, P 323.

2. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol VII, P 142.

for the rainfall and the song depicted their desire for abundance in milk and plentiful of water for cows. In another ritual, girls danced around the Morjaliya fire, with water pots on their heads, beating the ground with their feet and singing. "This is honey". Again four or eight women danced at the house of the bride to celebrate the wedding. The occasions of ritual dancing are festivals, celebrations, processions, marriages, reunion of friends, first occupation of towns and houses, the birth of children and similar auspicious events. Dances were also performed in honour of chief guests particularly for kings. In wealthy temples devdasis were the permanent employees both for performing dances and taking part in dramas which were presented in temples on certain occasions.¹

4.6.7 GURU NANAK ON RITUAL DANCES. Baba Nanak abhorred rituals and was of the view that a man who observes only rituals and does not perform true worship will come to realize that rituals are merely empty acts.²

In the quartet in Rag Asa at Page 356 of the S.G.G.S. Guru Nanak says, "that a person can be said to be learned only when his mind is full of compassion with an urge for service of mankind. A person who has subdued the five evils (Kam, Karodh, Moh, Lobh and Ahankar) can only be said to have succeeded by taking refuge in holy places. When the

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol 7, P 19-20.

2. Asa Di Var, P 99-100.

mind is attuned to the Lord, then only there is the real tinkling of ankle-bells in dances which are filled with devotion. When all these things take shape in the human life, even Yama cannot intimidate the man. Baba Nanak in this hymn has emphasised that the mind attuned to the infinite is the true tinkling of ankle-bells in ritual dances which are saturated in the devotion.¹

Guru Nanak says in S.G.G.S., P 470, that a person who believes in only rituals and does not perform true worship, he may read books, perform devotion in the morning and who worships stones utters falsehood, recites mantras thrice a day, puts marks on his head, carries two dhotis and covers his head with a cloth is not a true devotee. He should know that true worship is only that of the All pervading God. Only then he will realise that all the above rituals are of no use. Guru Nanak says : that every one should remember God with true devotion. Divine knowledge can not be acquired by performing rituals. A person may perform ritual for hundred years but he cannot obtain the God's grace. It is only through real Nam Simiran with which he can get the ultimate goal in life.²

1. S.G.G.S., P 356, M1.

2. Ibid, P 470.

4.6.8 MECHANICAL DANCE:

According to the Random House Dictionary of the English Language, the word 'mechanical' means acting or performing without spontaneity, spirit, individuality such as a mechanical performance of Hamlet, something habitual, routine or automatic or practised to such an extent that the action becomes mechanical, subordinating the spiritual to the materialistic. Dancing is an instinctive mode of muscular expression of feeling in man and many animals, especially birds. In the social life of the human race it has played a part which touches every activity of the individual and society. Dancing may be described as play in the absolute form. Rhythm is inseparable from its movements as it is from any bodily function and belongs to it. It is rather life expressed in muscular movements.

Dancing in the proper sense consists in rhythmical movement of any part or all parts of the body in accordance with some scheme of individual or concerted action. As Aristotle remarked, "dancing is imitative in all its forms, it is an artistic imitation of physical movements expressive of emotions or ideas".

In its simplest terms it has been described as merely the voluntary application of rhythmic principle when excitement induces an abnormally rapid oxidization of brain tissue, to the physical exertion by which the overcharged brain is relieved. Muscular movement of which dance is the most complete expression, is undoubtedly a method of auto intoxication of the very greatest potency. A girl who has waltz for one fourth of an hour is in the same condition as if she had drunk champagne.

Dance is thus a natural method of celebrating anything, and of expressing individual or social emotions or ideas. Primarily mere physical play, it has developed in many spheres, gymnastic and artistic as a pastime and as a sexual stimulus but in social evolution its main applications are ceremonial and the dramatic which of course may include various other functions of dance. Thus in the mimetic dances of the simpler cultures there are combined worship, dance, exercise, excitement, positive play and art.¹ Even some

1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. X, P 350.

of the folk dances lay emphasis on performance for the pleasure of participants.¹ They are performed to an accompaniment of sound of the instruments or the clapping of hands.²

TYPES OF MECHANICAL DANCES:

4.6.9 SWORD DANCE: Many types of sword dances are performed in most of the Asian countries including India. In Punjab, the sword dance is called Gatka. This is a very strenuous dance and to perform it skillfully, a dancer needs tremendous amount of practice. The dancers take sword in their hands and move in a swift manner, like a machine. In this dance they show various types of acrobatics, including cutting of bananas, wherein the dancer moves all over the stage swiftly,

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1. History of Dance (in Art and Education), P 4.
 2. Dancing, P 2.

a very strenuous dance and to perform it skillfully, a dancer needs too much of practice. The dancers take swords in their hands and move in a swift manner, like a machine. In this dance they show various types of acrobatics, including cutting of bananas, wherein the dancer moves all over the stage swiftly, with his eyes closed, he is handed over a sword in his hand. Some persons are made to lie down on floor of the stage with the bananas kept on different parts of their body. The dancer with the closed eyes and sword in his hand cuts the bananas. This dance is performed in other parts of India also where the dancers moves like a machine all over the stage. This type of mechanical dance attracts the public and the dancers are paid handsomely for performing various type of acrobatics.

4.6.10 TAMASHA. Tamasha which means a frivolous show, is another type of mechanical dance performed in various parts of India. Its counterparts are the Bhavai, Nautanki and patra. Tamasha flourished during the Maratha power in the 17th century. It was a form of pure entertainment for the Maratha nobles and soldiers. Over a period of time it has been getting more popular and vigorous. With slight adjustment and sophistication on its form, it has now graduated from the open grounds in villages to the theatres.

In this dance the rhythmic patterns are not intricate as in classical dance, rather common postures and expressions play a major part. The themes of drama are based on folk tales which are full of humour. The style of singing is different from any other form of music. Dholki or Halgi, a two faced percussion instrument accompanies the dance. Other instruments include a one stringed tumtum, a pair of tiny cymbals and a harmonium.

4.6.11 LAVANI. This is another type of mechanical dance. In this a story is described through the medium of dance, song and acting. At the end of the dance, the dancing girl goes to the patron and picks up money from his hand.¹

4.6.12 EIKA. Eika is yet another type of mechanical dance. It is a dance of the farmers and is performed during the spring season. The dancing group consists of a leader, five to six accompanists and forty to fifty dancers. The Eika party goes around houses in the villages, dancing, singing and playing drums.²

1. Dances of Asia, P 60.

2. Ibid, P 183.

Thus in Mechanical Dances dancers exhibit different types of skills and there is no element of spirituality. These are for the entertainment of the audience only.

4.6.13 GURU NANAK ON MECHANICAL DANCE. Mechanical dance is again the part of the verse of 465 of S.G.G.S. According to Hindu thought dance is connected with religion and spirituality, but in Ram Lila people simulate Lord Ram and Sita. This sort of drama is done with a view to earning bread. People gather in large numbers to witness the dance which is performed at night, when people are free from work. It is more in the nature of amusement than worship. The dancers make fool of the people by collecting money as donations in the name of God. Guru Nanak deprecated this type of mechanical dancing which is done for earning livelihood and has no spiritual value as it does not help a person to progress in the right direction. Such a dance befools innocent people. Attending such a dance is sheer waste of time. Mere jumping and dancing without righteousness within, is a futile exercise serving no useful purpose for both the performer and the onlooker. These are mere bodily movement without sublimity of innerself. True realization is to be found in one's deeds performed in accordance with the dictates of the God and not in outward show, which is mere hypocrisy. A hypocrite tries to show off that he is virtuous whereas he totally lacks this trait. Such a hypocrite dancer who tries to exhibit

purity is virtually a sinner and his dance, too, fails to convey the divine principle. As per Baba Nanak, it virtually means that those who dance for fun have to wail in the end. Mere jumping and dancing without devotion and love for the God are only human recreation leading to no spiritual gain.¹ In other words dancing should be with intense pure feelings of love for the God. Dancing without soul in it, cannot affect the mind which is filled with avarice and delusion. The true devotion is inspired when a devotee dances with the love of God in his mind. The love of God only resides in the hearts of those who have reverential fear of God.

1. S.G.G.S., P 465, M 1.

4.6.14 PRETENTIOUS DANCE:

Pretention means full of pretense or pretension or making an exaggerated outward show. Pantomimic and magical dances are example of pretentious dances. The dance of Devadasies, the dance at Shiva temple and a special type of dance performed during Durga Puja can also be classified as pretentious dances. These are briefly discussed below :-

4.6.15 PANTOMIMIC DANCE: From the point of view of aesthetics dancing can be described as muscular music. Like music, it expresses primarily itself, secondarily it expresses whatever is within the scope of the material of art. In this secondary function the dancing is called Pantomimic. A good deal of mysticism is attached to pantomimic dances which have had a considerable development in some parts of the world. These represent incidents in the lives of the guardian spirits of the tribe. The protector of the spirit is required to perform the same dances which have been shown to him, wherein he plays the part of the spirit and it is said that he acquires magical gifts such as the 'death bringer' and the 'water of life'.¹

1. Encyclopedia on Religion and Ethics, P 361. Vol. X,

4.6.16

MAGICAL DANCE: It is believed that dancing by virtue of its vigorous movements can induce vibrations in the environment. This is illustrated by the following two customs prevalent in some parts of the world :-

(i) A ball game of the hockey type is played for rainmaking. The rapid movements of the ball and the players are supposed to induce vibrations in the clouds.

(ii) In the second event, to produce a shower of rain, the nominated person goes through a curious process of quivering in his body and legs, while his assistants chant in tune with the movement. This process continues throughout the night and at day break he makes the final and exhaustive effort.¹ These quivering movements of the body are supposed to induce movements in the environment, thereby producing rain.

It is interesting to observe that a religion which has degenerated tends to follow orthodox magical practices more rigidly. The person practising this art is said to be possessing

1. Encyclopedia on Religion and Ethics P 361. Vol. X,

mystic powers and is capable of influencing course of events by occult control of nature or spirits. He can also supposedly do so by witchcraft.¹

In olden days in villages in many parts of India, specially in Punjab and Bihar, when a person fell seriously ill or was bitten by a snake his body was deemed to have been possessed by an evil spirit or ghost. The Tantrik (person possessing mystic powers) was called to drive away the evil spirit or ghost. The Tantrik did so by dancing ecstatically in front of the deity, in the process subjecting the ill-fated person to various forms of torture.

4.6.17 DANCE OF DEVADASIS: In the olden days, women used to be appointed as dancers and court-esans in the greater Hindu-temples. These women were known as devadasis or deveratal. In Travancore, these women were known as 'Kudikkar' meaning those belonging to the house of God. The devadasis used to pretend that they are the 'Slaves of God' and their actions were in the service of the God. The duties of these dancing girls (devadasis) were to fan and feed

1. Encyclopaedia Britanica, Vol. 19, P 324.

the idol, to carry the sacred light and to sing and dance before the God when He was carried in procession. They were also called the women of the temple and were provided free quarters within the temple and were given tax free lands and other favours.¹ Ironically, prostitution was prevalent amongst these women purported to be in the service of God. They were the dancing girls dedicated to the actual profession or generally married in a temple to a sword or God. The 'Tali' (a gold trinklet worn round the neck as a symbol of marriage) was tied around their neck by some man of their caste. In Western India, these type of women are known as "bhavin" (a handsome capricious woman). Bhavin is an attendant on an idol or a-mistress procuress. On attaining puberty a bhavin girl went through a form of marriage with the God, the rite being performed both at girl's house and in the temple. The bhavins practiced prostitution and differed from common prostitutes only in being dedicated to the God,, from her children she chose two or three to succeed her as temple servants.²

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1. Encyclopedia on Religion and Ethics, P 407-408.
Vol. I,
Nityasumangali Devadasi Tradition , P 36.
South India,
 2. Encyclopedia on Religion and Ethics, P 407-408.
Vol. I,

4.6.18

DANCE IN SHIVA TEMPLE: On 14th day of increase of the moon in the month of Phagun (one day before Holi festival in March), a festival is held during the night in honour of Lord Shiva. In the ceremonies, the image of the Lord is bathed four times and four separate temple services are performed during the night. Before the temple, the worshippers dance, sing and revel the whole night amidst the din of music. According to mythology, the occasion of this festival is related to Bhuvishwa Poorna in which a bird catcher detained in a forest during a dark night, climbed a willow tree under which was kept an image of Shiva linga. On shaking the branches of the tree, leaves and dew drops fell upon the image of the deity. People used to pretend that by this action Lord Shiva was very much pleased and they declared that worship of his Linga on that night should be considered as an art of unbounded merit.¹

4.6.19

DANCE DURING DURGA PUJA: Another saying goes that during the Durga Puja after the brahmins had been fed and the worship of the day completed, many rich men were supplied with a number of prostitutes. These women dressed richly and covered with ornaments, danced and sang before the idol of goddess Durga. The songs were

1. History and Mythology of Hindoos Vol. 4, P 20.

exceedingly obscene, the dances highly indecent and the dress of the dancing women extremely inciting. The clothing of the women being as fine as scarcely to deserve the name of a covering. The tresses of some were loose, hanging down to their waists. These dances were for exclusive gatherings, the crowds were kept out by keeping the doors shut. A group of six to eight women assisted by musicians, danced together for couple of hours. Rich spectators when highly pleased during the performance with a portion of the dance or song, threw large sums of money to the dancers and singers. After the performance these women provided service to rich men who made them lavish presents of garments as well as substantial sums of money.¹

4.6.20 SYMPATHETIC DANCE; Some applications of dance are sympathetic in the natural sense without being necessarily magical. It is recorded of old Madagascar that while men are at war and until they return, women and girls cease not a day and night to dance.....they believe that by dancing they impart strength, courage and good fortune to their husbands.²

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1. History and Mythology of Hindoos, P 114-115. Vol. III,
 2. Encyclopedia on Religions and Ethics, P 361. Vol. X,

4.6.21

GURU. NANAK ON PRETENTIOUS DANCE: Baba Nanak

was highly critical of pretentious dancing. In verse 465 of S G.G.S. he stated that some people pretend while dancing that they are possessed with divine current. They make body movements in a manner to simulate ecstasy which is experienced by real devotees of God. Such pretensions are only made to make an impression on the on-lookers that the dancer has imbibed divine attributes and is intoxicated with divine love. Baba Nanak has in explicit terms deprecated such dances which are meant to deceive the public as it neither helps the dancer nor the onlookers, but it only further deteriorates the social morality.

4.6.22

COMMERCIAL DANCE

In olden times, dance was a mode of worship. Prior to the Muslim invasion of India, dances were only performed in the temples to placate the deities. The dancers danced themselves to a state of ecstasy to attain spiritual union with the God.

As the Muslims came to India, dance became commercialised as they did not believe that this form of art was meant for devotion to be performed in temples only. During their rule, dance became a commercial venture as the dancers

started performing in the Courts of Sultans and Nawabs and were suitably rewarded in kind and cash. The artists in order to earn more and more money, started performing with the only aim of pleasing the audience. In temples, where the dance was performed to please the deities, the dancers used to get only a portion of offerings which were barely adequate to make their two ends meet. By and by, the priests became greedier and took away major portion of the offerings, leaving the dancers high and dry. Since their very survival was at peril, the dancers were left with no option but to perform in the Courts where they could earn handsome money. Dancing thus became commercial. There was also great degeneration in dance form as the dancers with a view to drawing more public to their shows, started singing and dancing on cheap and vulgar songs and tunes. Due to Muslims influence, the religious sentiments vanished. They started dancing with wine glasses in their hands. In order to balance the cups they started giving importance to foot work which made the dance look very attractive. People in general also started enjoying this type of dance. The kings started keeping the dancers permanently on their pay-roll. Their whole family was looked after by kings. Since they

started leading a comfortable life, they preferred dancing in the courts in comparison to temples and the dance took the shape of commercial art. In this form of dance, there was no rasa or bhava which was related to the soul. The dancers were only interested in worldly pleasures, so they composed the themes which were liked by the general audience specially the kings.

Paradoxically, even in Raas Lila in Brij, artists started performing with the sole aim of collecting money and enriching themselves. Raas Lila is performed as a folk drama in many parts of India, but the Raas lila of Brij deserves special mention, as it was here in the home of Lord Krishna, that it was first enacted in its present form and has been danced in an unbroken tradition since the sixteenth century.¹

A special stage is made for Raas Lila where two seats are placed, one for Lord Krishna and the second for Radha. The dance drama has a traditional opening with Radha seated on the stage. In the beginning, traditional devotional songs are sung in the background. Thereafter gopies offer Puja to Radha. They form a circle as Krishna enters the stage.² In Vrindavan, the performance of Raas

1 Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 165.

2 Ibid, P 165-166.

Lila carries on throughout the night, right till the break of dawn. People are so entranced with the Raas Lila that they remain glued to their seats throughout the performance. During the entire show, the audience are made to believe that the God will appear in these artists and will shower blessings on them. People lavishly throw money on the artists in the hope that they will be bestowed with the grace of the Lord. The artists themselves coax the audience to throw money on the stage otherwise the Lord will not shower his blessings which will adversely effect them and their near and dear ones.

4.6.23

GURU NANAK ON COMMERCIAL DANCE: In the sloka at Page 465 of Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak deprecated the mechanical dancing for earning livelihood. He says that the disciples play instruments and Gurus dance. They shake their feet and roll their heads. The dust flies and falls in their hair. The audience see, laugh and go home. For the sake of earning bread they waste time. Actually the task of the Guru is to instil in the disciple reverence for God.¹

Guru Nanak has mentioned about earning of livelihood through dance, however he does not appreciate it. True teachings should inspire the disciples

1. S.G.G.S., P 465 M1.

with feelings and thoughts to lead an ideal life and dance should be directed for achieving that objective. The holiness of mind and one pointed attention for achieving higher objectives by love for God should be the sole aim of human beings. But because of selfish approach of man for making money, the education in dance failed to transform the disciple's behaviour in that direction because the Guru's conduct and performance was money making oriented. The result was the negation of mental or spiritual development amongst them. Dance must be saturated with the essence of spirituality. Then only the persons who witness such a dance will be divinised. Dance should be for life and not for a living. It is not earning a livelihood that is important, what matter is the ideals for which one lives. The ideals should be to enable one to manifest the divinity within. Therefore the performance of dance should not be pursued as a means for achieving a livelihood. This is a degrading attitude. All worldly achievements can confer, only limited pleasure. How then, is one to achieve lasting bliss ? It cannot be got through outward body movements. It is only, through inner experience that the lasting bliss can be secured. For this

purpose harmony between thought, word and deed is essential. The dance should not be performed, merely for acquiring riches as these are short lived. One should not become slave of wealth. Wealth without character is worthless. The blossoming of one's character leads to radiance in life.

DEVOTION AND DANCE:

4.6.24

DEVOTION: It is defined as "the supreme single pointed attachment to the Lord.¹ It is something sweet, soothing, refreshing and restoring.² It should be pure, sincere and intense.³ God and His wards are inextricably inter-related. The devotion of an individual is open to suspicion if he has love for God but does not pay heed to his words. Desire for God but neglect of His injunctions cannot be the true characteristic of devotion.⁴ There is no use of Man's meditation and learning, if his heart is not cleansed of all selfishness and is also not coated with love.⁵ It is common for the people to be devoted and think of God in times of distress and need. Such devotion becomes conditional i.e. for purpose of achieving a goal. Such an attitude has an element of selfishness. Selfless devotion (Ananya Bhakti) is that devotion which wants and will, for a union with the Absolute, for its own sake. Devotion does not mean worship of the Lord

1. Satya Sai Baba Speaks, Vol. III, P 86.

2. Satya Sai Baba Speaks, Vol. II, P 15.

3. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 110.

4. Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1979, P 42.

5. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 107.

as an emergency measure. It is for this, it is said that real happiness consists in union with the God. Such happiness is different from emotional rapture and is indeed a state of extinction of all otherness.¹ Devotion is complete surrender, not a part-time affair or something taken on credit. Every bit has to be earned and deposited; there are no over-drafts.² One easy way of devotion is through love of fellow beings and society. When love for others becomes a life-breadth of individuals, they automatically commune with the divine and get all rigour and experience real happiness.³

The word devotion is synonymous with spirituality. Spiritual life should not be regarded as living in isolation. Spiritual life enjoins one that he be free from attachment and hatred and look upon all mankind with an integral vision.

4.6.25

GURU NANAK ON DEVOTIONAL DANCE: Devotional singing and dancing has been applauded by Guru Nanak as is borne out by his hymn at P. 991 of S.G.G.S. wherein he says; "How fortunate am I that God has bought me over for a price, as

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1. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 103-104.
 2. Satya Sai Baba Speaks, Vol. VIII, P 12.
 3. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 109.

a slave. My wages are Master's words and I do what ever I am bidden. What cleverness can the servant show ? My mother is a slave and so also my father. I am the off-spring of slaves. My slave mother dances, my slave father sings in devotion to the God and in their company I too sing the praise of the Lord".¹ In this verse mother and father are symbolic terms. Father means contentment, mother means 'Buddhi' (intellect). Where there is contentment, the will to serve others emerges and the right thinking makes a man move according to the dictates of the Lord. In such a state the 'Buddhi' dances the dance of devotion to the tune of contentment in ecstasy. Following conclusions can be drawn from this verse :-

- (i) When a man is immersed in the love of Divine, he acts according to the commands of Almighty.
- (ii) He achieves contentment which gives rise to the will to serve mankind.
- (iii) As one progresses in devotion to the Lord his very being is returned with the cosmic dance which his beloved God is regulating throughout the universe. Thus nature, through number of ways, helps one to unite with his beloved.

1. S.G.G.S., P 991.

4.2.26

DANCE VIS-A-VIS NAM-SIMRAN: In the Ashtapadi in Rag Asa at Page 412 of Adi Granth, Guru Nanak has highlighted the importance of Nam Simran and also makes a reference to dancing. In this verse, he says that all sorrows of a person, who with truthful heart sings the glory of the Lord, are effaced. The real way to rid of sorrows is Nam simran. When one understands the words of Guru he gets the vision of God within, and reaches a state where he plays the music without hands and dances to his glory without feet. When the Lord bestows His grace, a person is free from the fetters of 'Maya' and gets bliss and because of the joy derived from that blissful state of feelings of love for Divine he involuntarily dances, and forgets about the worldly attachment.¹ From this verse we can derive the following conclusion :-

(i) Nam simran is the key to the removal of all sorrows in the life of a man. Therefore, dance in itself is not sufficient to achieve this end.

4.2.27

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS WITH WHICH DANCE SHOULD BE PERFORMED:

Dance is an instinct, a compelling emotion within us that urges us to find expression in dance that is, outward rhythmic movements. Dance can

1. S.G.G.S , P 412 M1.

be termed as the rhythmic physical movement of the body which is prompted by feelings and emotions. There is a feeling of pleasure as well as satisfaction in these rhythmic movements which exercise the body and at the same time release inner tensions. Moreover these movements can induce hypnotic trances which may have led to the belief that dance had magical powers and consequently it came to be used in early cults and rites for propitiating the Gods and driving away evil spirits. By dancing man expressed himself in a way which he conceived as the most powerful and eloquent means at his disposal. He celebrated by dancing, he gained courage by dancing and often like birds and animals around him he courted with help of dance.¹

Dance is found among all men whether in primitive or advanced societies with its functions varying from religion to pure entertainment. Olden tribes in some parts of the world performed the war dance which is the dance of joy and energy. They also performed the dance of nature to propitiate the divinities in the sun, water and wind and to appease the celestial bodies for progress and good harvest. Funeral dances are still performed

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P.17.

by Negroes, Eskimos and the aborigines in South America.¹

The essential feature of a dance is the spontaneous movement of the muscles and limbs under the influence of some strong emotion, feeling or passion, such as joy, pleasure, anger or religious exaltation.² The most appropriate depiction of feeling and emotion in a dance is contained in the words "Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram". It means that pinnacle of beauty is 'Shiva' who is the truth. In other words, highest form of beauty is art and that Art and beauty is personified in the form of God Shiva who is the truth.³

4.6.28

GURU NANAK ON FEELINGS-EMOTIONS IN DANCE: Guru Nanak visualised the impact of dance in the upliftment of mind for progress in spiritual field. In his verse Asa M1 at Page 350 of S.G.G.S., he emphasises the feelings and emotions with which dance should be performed to raise it to the level of spiritualism.

The feelings and emotions in dance have been

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1. Art of Indian Dancing, P 7.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid., P 1.

expressed by Guru Nanak through 'Pakhawaj' and 'Baja'. Pakhawaj is a percussion instrument which alongwith other musical instruments forms an accompaniment for performing the art of dance. Guru Nanak has stated that 'Pakhawaj' should represent 'Love' and 'Baja' the intellect and this should be the 'bhakti' and 'tap'. He further states that one should dance fully charged with these feelings in heart which will bring out the true emotions and bliss in the mind of the performer. This he termed as the true devotion. The extended meaning of the hymn is :-

Pakhawaj was the common instrument which formed the accompaniment to dance besides other musical instruments since time immemorial. Guru Nanak says that 'Pakhawaj' should be of emotion and love.

Further in this verse it has been stressed that when both the instruments of pure understanding and drum of love play together in union, one enters the state of bliss. This is the real devotion and penance. In this state of mind when a person dances with measured steps, it amounts to dance with divine attributes, which should be performed during the life time. Only a person who understands the Lord in correct perspective dances in the real

sense of the word. Dance which is full of devotion to God is 'the real dance'.¹

In reality, during the performance of a dance the song should be sustained in the throat; its meaning should be shown by the eye movement and rhythm marked by the foot work. Where ever there is the movement of hands, there the glances follow; where the glances go, the mind follows: where the mind goes, mood follows where the mood goes there is the flavour (Rasa).² There are nine type of Rasas in dance depicting various moods.

Baba Nanak further says that service to mankind and contented life should be the ringing cymbals, constant joy of heart should be the ankle bells, intense love for God should be the music and melody, which should form the accompaniment of the dance. Fear for, and respect for the God in all poses should be the spins of dance and control of senses should be the belly dance. In this way if the dancer dances then he will always be fresh. The 'tals' which are devoid of pure feeling are not the correct ones and only cater to carnal desires. Contentment and truth are like two different 'tals', the rhythm which comes out of the

1. S.G.G.S., P 350.

2. Encyclopaedia Britanica, Vol. 7, P 18.

foot work should take you to the eternal austerity. The 'nad' which is produced should depict only one 'Bhava' that is devotion to God. In the end, Baba Nanak says that gathering should be of learners, whatever you speak at the time of the dance it should look as if it is coming from the mouth of the Guru. All other dances which are devoid of such divine attributes only cater to the lower senses of the mind.¹

When a dance is bereft of holy and sublime approach of mind towards God, it loses the significance of spiritual approach. In such a case there are only body movements without attuning the mind with the God. Such dances serve no useful purpose either for the one who dances or for those who witness such performances. They just enjoy the acrobatics of the dancer and satisfy the recreational urge. Such dances have no meaning in upliftment of the mind and only satisfy the carnal pleasures of mind. To give an example, in the Laiharabo festival in Manipur, the most attractive part is the performance of Moirangparva. This is a tragic love story of 'Khamba' and 'Thoibi' who had married despite opposition but ultimately

1. S.G.G.S., P 350.

died. The depiction of such a story in a dance would in no way be instrumental in bringing the man nearer to God. Guru Nanak has rightly deprecated such dances as these arouse only base feelings in a man.¹

According to Baba Nanak, there is no art unless it awakens and touches the soul. He preferred music to dance for communicating his internal feelings. Guru Nanak had in depth knowledge of the power of poetry, music and dance, and for this reason he chose the medium of poetry and music to convey his spiritual thoughts and teachings. "Guru Nanak could not live without inspirational music coming to him from heaven", says Puran Singh.²

Guru Nanak was conscious of the natural impulses governing human behaviour. Natural urge to depict one's inner feelings of joy and sorrow through body movement viz dance were not alien to him. What he preached was that these urges should not follow a course which is base but should be channelized to attain bliss. In this context he disapproved dances which are performed as mere shows, for collecting money and for satisfying

1. Dance Dialects of India, P 175.

2 Humanism of Guru Nanak, P 33.

the animal self. He being a great lover of art used it to motivate the people in the upliftment of mind and purifying the self to achieve the real goal of life, which is the realization of the Lord and to merge in Him.

CHAPTER V

INSTRUMENTS USED IN GURU NANAK'S TIME

RABAB, PAKHAWAJ AND DHOLAK ETC.

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PART A : INTRODUCTION TO MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

5.1.1 ORIGIN OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:

In Indian society and its culture, religion has held a very important place. Music too was greatly influenced by religion and that is the reason, music scholars of ancient times related the origin of musical instruments with some Gods and Goddess.¹

Any material which is used for producing sound can be termed as a musical instrument. It is said that human body particularly the voice, is the oldest musical instrument. In our musical texts of yore it is called 'gatra veena', gatra means human body and veena is the musical instrument played by Goddess Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge. Clapping of hands, beating of buttocks and thighs, stamping of feet on ground, whistling etc. are auditory actions of the human body which can be termed as the first musical instruments.²

Since music is an integral part of dance, the musical instruments therefore form its inse-

1. Aesthetical Essay, P 154.

2. Musical Instruments of India, P 28.
their History and Development,

parable accompaniment. These are the very heart and soul of a dance. It can be stated that there can be no dance without musical instruments. These provide rhythm and melody to both dancer and the accompanying singer. Both percussion and string instruments provide depth and dignity to a dance. When a dancer does 'Abhinaya', the music lends grace to the gestures of the dancer. Tabala and Pakhawaj are two most important musical instruments used for providing beat and rhythm in classical dance. Dholak is the popular instrument of folk dance. In addition, in Kathak dance, when a dancer dances on bhajans, cymbals (Majira) are used to give melodious effect. These are also used in Bharat Natyam. Musical instruments fix the rhythm which the dancer has to follow.

The dancer starts the dance with 'Vandana' which is not set to any rhythm. Thereafter, the Tabala and Pakhawaj players play a pattern which sets the beats of a 'tal'. The performer dances on these beats. Tabala and Pakhawaj players make vital contribution to the success of the dance. Their task is not only to keep the 'theke' steady and sweet, but also to play those patterns which the dancer may choose to dance on. Tabala and

Pakhawaj players have to fill the gaps during the dance, such as the empty 'avrti' between two neighbouring 'tukras' or the moments where dance becomes a little dull because of the lack of foot work of the dancer. This is because a dancer cannot go on dancing breathlessly for a long time and has to pause repeatedly during the performance to regain breath. In such moments, it is the accompanist who ensures that the performance goes on uninterrupted despite gaps in the dance. In the same way, in music also, Tabala and Pakhawaj play a very important role for providing base to the singer. When a dance is performed on bhajans, Dholak is also used as an accompaniment in providing rhythm in both music and dance. In Northern India, percussion instruments like Tabala, Pakhawaj and Dholak are an integral part of Sikh kirtans.

In addition to the percussion instruments, string instruments are also used in the dance to provide 'Lehra'. 'Lehra' not only indicates the extent of rhythm but also keeps the mind of the dancer attuned with the cycle of beats. The prominent string instruments used are Sorod, Sarangi, Sitar and Rabab. Rabab was the favourite instrument of Baba Nanak.

Ghungroos are used in dance as well as in music. These generate a very pleasing sound. These are used in temples both by dancers as well as singers.

5.1.2 CLASSIFICATION OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: According to Sangeet Shastra Darpan musical instruments can be classified into four types :-

- (i) Tata
- (ii) Sushira
- (iii) Avanaddha
- (iv) Ghana

(i) Tata: It is derived from the root tan. That is, these instruments have some form of wire, which when stretched produces musical sound. These are called string instruments and are divided into two categories, viz Tata and Vitata. In the former type of instruments the stroke is given by the fingers as in Tanpura. In the latter type the stroke is not given by fingers but the sound is produced with the help of an article like 'Bow' or 'Misrab', as in Sitar, Bela and Israj.

(ii) Sushira: These instruments are hollow from inside and are played by blowing air into them by mouth: The examples are Shehnai,

Flute and Been. However instruments like Harmonium in which the air is blown with help of a fan are played by hands.

(iii) Avanaddha: Avanaddha means to be covered with hide. Instruments which have one or two faces covered with hide fall under this category. The examples are Mridangam, Tabala, Nagara, Damaru, Dhol etc.

(iv) Ghana: The solid instruments fall under this category. Once made, these do not require any tuning. These are made of some metal or wood. Cymbals, castanets and rattles belong to this class.¹

1. Sangeet Shastra Darpan, Part II, P 135-136

PART B : DESCRIPTION OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

PAKHAWAJ:

5.2 1 ORIGIN: It is difficult to trace the exact origin of Pakhawaj. There is no evidence to prove that its origin has any connection with Punjab. However, this musical instrument has been extremely popular for the last five centuries in Punjab as well as in other Northern Indian states. According to the history of gharanas, Diwakar Pandit and Sudhakar Pandit (Suraj Khan and Chand Khan), the disciples of Swami Haridas were the key personalities of not one but three gharanas of Punjab. It is for certain that these music scholars brought Pakhawaj to Punjab. Even after the commencement of 'Khayal gayaki' in which tabala was the accompaniment, the people of Punjab kept alive the tradition of Dhrupad singing wherein Pakhawaj is the accompaniment. All scholars of music agree that 'Dhrupad Ang' was prevalent in Sikh Kirtan. However, gradually as 'Khayal Gayaki' replaced 'Dhrupad gayaki', in the similar way, tabala replaced Pakhawaj.¹ All the same, Pakhawaj is a special percussion instrument

1. Gurmati Kirtan Vich Varte Gai Sajan Da P 26.
 Sabhiacharak Ate Itihasak Pichhokar -
 Thesis by Rajinder Kaur (Punjabi),

of India. Before arrival of Tabala, Pakhawaj was the only percussion instrument used in Kirtans in Punjab.¹

The assumption of some scholars that the musical instrument which is called Pakhawaj in Northern India is known by the name Mridang in Southern India is incorrect.² Pakhawaj used in Northern India differs in appearance and sound from the Mridang of Southern India.³ The major difference between Pakhawaj and Mridang is that the former is made of wood and the later of clay. From the very import of word 'Mridangas', it appears that its body was originally made of clay. Reference of Mridang is also found in Buddhist and Jain culture.⁴ A number of musical instruments are seen in the hands of musicians on the sculptures and paintings of ancient times. In some of these, Pakhawaj can be seen in the hands of some musicians. This goes to prove that this is a very old instrument.

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1. The Nature and Place of Music in Sikh Religion and its Affinity with Hindustani Classical Music, Thesis by Ajit Singh Paintal, P 33.
 2. The Music of India, P 145.
 3. Bhartiya Sangeet Vadya, P 93.
 4. Bhartiya Sangeet Vadya, P 140-141.

These days this instrument is played with 'Dhrupad' and 'Dhamar' shelly. This musical instrument is also played with 'Trivat', 'Chaturang' and 'Tarana' of 'Dhrupad' style. Pakhawaj is played when the 'bols' of tals are of open hand. It is also used if Raga 'Lakshan', 'Swar Malika' and 'Tal Lakshan' are of 'Dhrupad Ang'. If a singer is singing in 'Dhamar Tal' in that case also Pakhawaj is used.¹ The word Mridang is found in the ancient books of music and reference to the word Pakhawaj is seen from the 15th century onwards. Guru Nanak has used the word Pakhawaj in his hymn :-

"Baja Mati Pakhawaj Bhau".²

This indicates the fact that Guru Nanak was extremely fond of this instrument that is why he has mentioned this musical instrument often. Moreover the use of musical instruments was a must in the Kirtans of Guru Nanak. An artist needs a percussion instruments as an accompaniment which provides Tal. 'Dhrupad Ang' is incomplete without Pakhawaj. For a long time devotional music was sung in Punjab in 'Dhrupad' style.

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1. Gurmati Kirtan Vich Varte Gai Sajan Da P 149.
Sabhiacharak Ate Itihasak Pichhokar -
A Thesis by Rajinder Kaur (Punjabi),
 2. S.G.G.S., P 125.

5.2.2 THE SHAPE OF PAKHAWAJ: This instrument consists of a hollow shell of wood larger at one end than the other, upon which are strung two heads of skin, fastened to wooden hoops and strained by leather braces interlaced and passing the entire length of Pakhawaj. Small pieces of wood placed between the shell and braces are used for tuning the instrument. The two heads are tuned to the tonic, fourth or fifth, according to whether the music is to be in Madhyama or Panchama Shruti. The centre of the smaller head of this peculiar drum is coated with a composition of resin, oil and wax and an embroidered cloth is generally placed upon the upper side of the shell for ornamental purpose.¹

Pakhawaj is played by the hands, fingertips and wrists in a very peculiar fashion. Drum playing was a great art among Indian performers and to achieve a high degree of proficiency entailed years of study and practice. The smaller head of Pakhawaj is struck by the right hand and the larger head by the left. This drum is considered to be the most primitive of all Indian instruments. Its origin is described in the puranas as under :-

1. The Music and Musical Instruments of P 137.
 Southern India and Deccan.

"When Mahadeva elated by his victory over the invincible demon Tripurasura began to dance, surrounded by Indra and other deities, Brahma is said to have invented the Pakhawaj to serve as an accompaniment and under His direction God Ganesha was the first one to have performed upon it.¹

TABALA:

5.2.3 ORIGIN: It is said that tabala was brought to India by the Muslim invaders. The origin of the word tabala is from the Arabic word "Tabal", which means musical instrument whose face is upwards and the top surface is flat. In Arab countries, the musical instrument similar to 'dundhbi' was known as tabal and was played by sticks. This was a type of 'nagara' for boosting morale of soldiers and used to be played behind the marching Armies going to battle.

It may be stated that tabala is the most famous musical instrument. It is divided into two parts. Left side is called 'Duggi' and the right side is called 'Chattu'. The right portion of tabala is made of wood, while the left one is made of clay or metal. The upper parts of both Duggi and Chattu

1. The Music and Musical Instruments of P 138.
Southern India, and Deccan.

are made of leather. Both parts are hollow from inside. While playing both sides are always used together and are tuned as two heads of the Pakhawaj.¹

5.2.4 THE INVENTION OF TABALA: Tabala, although considered to be of lower standard than Pakhawaj, is played like it. According to Capt Willard, Pakhawaj divided into two separate parts is called tabala. However, according to some scholars tabala in its present form was invented by Amir Khusrao by splitting Pakhawaj into two parts viz, The right part and the Left Part.²

Baba Nanak has used the word 'Tabalbaz' on page 142 of the S.G.G.S.³ Tabala has replaced Pakhawaj as the musical instruments in Sikh Kirtans.

5.2.5 PARTS OF TABALA:

PURI: The top portion of the tabala is covered with leather made of goat skin and is called 'Puri' which can be tightened with the help of strings. 'Puri' comprises of three layers of leather, the leather of the lower most layer is stiff whereas that of the top two layers is soft. The hard part is called 'Gudri'. In ancient time, this work was

1. Bhartiya Sangeet Vadya, P 72.

2. Sangeet Shastra Darpan, Part I, P 92.

3. S.G.G.S., P 142.

done with the help of a big bangle. This bangle was made of iron, wood and brass. In present days 'Gudari' is known as 'Jal'. There are holes in the Jal and with the help of these holes the 'badhi' is tightened. With the help of the upper leather different sounds are produced as per the requirement.¹

SIYAHİ: After 'Puri' is tied on tabala, a special type of masala called siyahi is pasted in its centre. The masala (Siyahi) is made of iron powder, coal and cooked rice, which are mixed to form a powder. First a thin layer of $2\frac{3}{4}$ " is pasted in the middle of Puri, when it becomes dry it is made soft by rubbing a stone on it. When it becomes soft again, one more layer is pasted on it. Second layer is slightly thicker than the first one. Five to seven layers are used on one Puri. The last layer is one inch thick. Siyahi helps in creating resonance in tabala. Siyahi has been in use since ancient times.²

BADHI AND GATTA: There are sixteen holes in 'Jal' in which leather strings are tied. These badhis are made of leather. The leather of badhis is hard. This leather should not be broken from

1 Bhartiya Sangeet Vadya, P 141.

2. Ibid.

anywhere. Some people also use rope instead of leather, however leather is more durable than rope. With the help of Badhi, the Puri is tuned. In Bombay, Camel leather is used for badhi. These badhis though more durable are very difficult to tighten. When badhi is tightened then Gattas are put inside the badhi. These gattas are made of wood, four badhis can be put on one gatta. These gattas help in fine tuning of tabala.¹ Gattas are used only on chattu. The dugi is without gattas.

5.2.6

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TABALA AND PAKHAWAJ:

Tabala holds a very prominent place in the life of musicians of Punjab. The Punjab Gharana is very well known for Tabala. The main difference between Pakhawaj and tabala is that the former is a one piece musical instrument and the later is in two pieces. Pakhawaj is played with open hand 'bols' whereas tabala has closed hand 'bols'. Further, Pakhawaj is the instrument of 'Dhrupad' style and tabala is related with 'Khyal' gayaki. Since 'Dhrupad' was very famous in Punjab, that is the reason it took so long for tabala to take the place of Pakhawaj.

1. Bhartiya Sangeet Vadya, P 141.

DHOLAK:

5.2.7 ORIGIN OF DHOLAK: It is an ancient musical instrument, evidence of which is found from Indus valley civilization onwards. In some of the seals of Mohanjodaro figures of men playing long cylindrical drums can be seen.¹

It is a bifacial membranophonic instrument which is hollow from within and is generally made of Mango, Beeja, Sisham or Sagwan wood. Animal hide is fixed on each side of the mouth either directly or held by rings. There is usually a bracing of either leather or rope passing from end to end which is used for tightening the parchment.

The instrument was also in use during the time of Guru Nanak and a reference to it is found in the following hymn composed by Guru Nanak :-

"Tal Madeere Ghat ke Ghat,
Dholak Duniya Baj Ri Baj."²

In Punjabi language Dholak is also called

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1. Musical Instruments of India, P 71.
their History and Development,
 2. S.G.G.S., P 349.

Dholaki. It is used as an accompaniment of Bhajans, folk songs and folk dances performed at various occasions like marriages and festivals.

5.2.8 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DHOLAK AND TABALA: The main difference between Dholak and tabala is that Dholak is a folk instrument while tabala is used for classical as well as folk. Dholak is used in all the folk dances of Punjab. Right from Guru Nanak's time, ladies used to play dholak while performing kirtans at homes. Whereas, Tabala is now used in Sikh kirtans. Like Pakhawaj, dholak is also a one piece musical instrument.

RABAB:

5.2.9 ORIGIN OF RABAB: Rabab is not an Indian Instrument. References to this instrument are found in books of Persian literature.¹ This instrument was brought to India by the Persians who came from Middle East i.e. Persia and Arabia.² It is a common saying by the followers of Sikh religion that Guru Nanak invented 'Rabab' and taught it to Mardana.³

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1. Musical Instrument of India, P 49.
their History and Development.
 2. Ibid, P 39.
 3. Vadan Kala, P 270.

It has a pear shaped resonator covered with parchment. There is a neck and short finger board without frets. Ain-i-Akbari mentions about a six stringed Rabab.¹

Capt Day in his book "The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and Decean" writes, "The Indian Rabab is principally used in Punjab and Upper India, its use in other parts is confined to Mohemmdans."² Further at Page 103 of his book he writes, "The rebecerce popular in Europe, was a form of the Rabab, brought to Spain by the Moors, who in turn had derived it from Persia and Arabia. Here again, Aryan origin is evident. The Rabab according to old works is a form of 'Vina' and it is popular in the Northern India and Afghanistan."³ Rabab used to be played by Mardana while singing the hymns composed by Guru Nanak. Bhai Mardana was a life time companion of Guru Nanak.⁴

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1. Musical Instruments of India, P 139.
their History and Development.
 2. The Music and Musical Instruments P 127
of Southern India and Decean.
 3. Ibid, P 103.
 4. Punjab wich Sangeet Kala De Nikas P 68.
Te Vikas,

Rabab was the musical accompaniment used by Guru Nanak during his kirtans. It is said that Guru Nanak made a special type of Rabab for Mardana. Mardana used to play Rabab while Guru Nanak used to perform kirtan. The special type of Rabab was made so that it could be carried conveniently during the long journeys undertaken by Baba Nanak along with his companions. This is also said that for some years Mardana took training from Bhai Firanda, a famous Rabab player of those times. It is mentioned in Shaki's that Guru Nanak himself never played Rabab. He only used^{to} utter the following :-

"Mardane Rabab Cher, Bani Aiyee hai."

Meaning oh! Mardane, start playing Rabab, we will sing hymns. It is not known as to which Gayan style Rabab was used in those days, however, in present day Rabab is neither used with Dhrupad nor with Dhamar shelly. This instrument was very dear to Guru Nanak however, later on it was not used in Sikh kirtans.¹

Rabab is a string instrument. The shape of Rabab is like peacock. From first century onwards,

1. Gurmati Kirtan Vich Varte Gai Sajan P 258-259.
Da Sabhiacharak Ate Itihasak Pichhokar
- Thesis by Rajinder Kaur (Punjabi).

Rabab not only became popular in Punjab but all over India. Some people attribute the origin of Rabab to Guru Nanak. However, the Rabab played during his time seems to have been designed by Guru Nanak from an older existing version of Rabab.¹ In all the photographs displayed at various Sikh religious places and books on Baba Nanak, Mardana has generally been shown with a Rabab in his hands. Mardana lived with Guru Nanak for 45 years. Mardana's son, Shazada was also a skilled Rabab player. After the death of Mardana, he was appointed by Guru Nanak to be his successor and accompanied Guru Nanak in his travels.²

According to Shushila Misra, "The Rabab, probably of Arabian origin had been considerably improved upon by the Rababiyas before it was brought into India. There was a time when Lucknow was the home of some eminent rababiyas, namely, Pyar Khan, Jaffar Khan, Basat Khan, Chajju Khan, Bahadur Khan and Kazim Ali Khan (sons of Jaffar Khan). Kazim Ali is still remembered as one of the greatest

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1. Gurmati Kirtan Vich Varte Gai Sajan Da P 260.
Sabhiacharak Ate Itihasak Pichhokar.
 2. The Nature and Place of Music in Sikh P 354.
Religion and its Affinity with
Hindustani Classical Music.

rababiyas. His sons Sadig Ali and Nissar Khan, and two sons of Jeewan Khan, viz Bahadur Khan and Haider Khan were all great rababiyas.

The Rabab is believed to have been imported into North India by the Muslims. Today the Rabab is almost extinct. The last Rabab recital that the author heard was by Ustad Allaudian Khan of Maihar accompanied on the Tabala by Pandit Kanthe Maharaj in a studio concert of Akashwani Lucknow. It is entitled article "Sarodiyān Ke Gharāne", (in the Golden Jubilee Souvenir of the Bhatkhande Music College 1976) the sarod artiste late Umar Khan has stated that a special class of artist known as Meers used to play on the Afghan rabab daf and sing martial songs and songs of heroism in front of the marching armies of Babar. According to him it was these Meers who brought rabab into North India. They were given 'Jagirs' in different places where they settled down. The batch which settled down in Bulandshahar (In Mugam Barah Basti Bagrasi) had as their leader Gul Mohammed Khan, the senior most Meer. His son Haddad Khan and the latter's son Miyan Niyamatullan Khan became shagirds of Miyan Basant Khan. They altered the goat strings into plate and iron strings.

Of his two sons Ustad Karamat Ullah Khan stayed on in Allahabad, while the other scholarly son who shifted to Calcutta became well known as professor Asadullah Khan Kaukabh. Another branch of Meers settled down in Shaahjahanpur, Insaf Khan Rababiya and his son Inayat Khan Sarodiya became well known.

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, the renowned and highly polished sarod maestro (who shot into wide fame while only in his twenties) has categorically stated that it was his great grand - father Gulam Ali Khan who gave us the sarod as we know it today by bringing about several modifications in rabab. He has also said that the tough bearded rabab player Ghulam Bandegi Khan Bangash came to India from the rugged sun scorched plains of Kabul about two hundred and fifty years ago. Through generations of maestros, the rabab was polished and converted into today's sophisticated and internationally popular sarod.¹

According to Popley, "The Rabab is a fine Muhammadan instrument, with a shallow bowl made of wood covered with parchment. It is something like a flattened and shortened sitar, but has no frets. It has four strings, one or two of brass

1. Musical Heritage of Lucknow, P 87-89.

and two of gut, with sympathetic metal strings at the side. Sometimes the two upper strings are doubled. All the six strings may be of gut. The instrument is played with a bow of horse hair. The strings are tuned in one of the following ways :-

Sa Pa Ma Sa (C G F C) or Sa Sa Pa
Ma Sa (C CG, C E)

Sometimes it has a few catgut frets placed at diatonic intervals. It is a handsome instrument and has a very pleasing tune, some what fuller than that of the Sarangi. It lends itself to the grace better than Sitar, as it has no frets.

An officer living in the North West Frontier province writes that in that province the Rabab is usually played with a plectrum of the fingers and never with the bow., Many of them also have frets, but never more than four. The Rabab is made from mulberry wood and the best instruments came from Kabul.¹

According to Dev, "Even today instruments resembling this fretles shortnecked Lute are found in North India under the names dotara, rubaiya and so on, though there are minor variations in detail.

1. The Music of India, P 115-119.

Related and perhaps originating from this is the rabab which is restricted to North-West India mainly. The word rabab might have indicated both bowed and plucked Lutes. In early Arabic music, according to many scholars, it seems to have been of the former type. A Rababi of Arabia tenth century A.D. describes a rabab which could have been a bowed instrument. But the lute of this name, familiar in Kashmir and Afghanistan, is a plucked one and has been known to the Northern areas of India for nearly five hundred years now. Two mystic poets Kabir and Kaishnadasa mention it. The Ain-i-Akbari speaks of a rabab with six strings of gut, but some with twelve and others with eighteen. Sangeeta Parijata, a musical text of the 17th century not only refers to the instrument but goes so far as to etymologically drive the word 'Rabab' from the Sanskrit 'rava' meaning 'sound'.¹

The rabab now in use in Kashmir has a hollow wooden body with a waist. The resonator is covered with skin and the fingerboard with a wooden plank. On the side cover, there is a thin bridge over which pass six strings of gut tightened by pegs: besides

1. Gurmati Kirtan Vich Varte Gai Sajan P 284-285
Da Sabhiacharak Ate Itihasak Pichhokar,

these main strings. There are eleven metallic ones acting as resonators. One interesting fact is that there are no frets as such but three guts are tied across the dandi at its farther end to indicate note positions. This contrivance could well have developed into the metallic frets of later instruments.¹"

KINGRI:

5.2.10

ORIGIN OF KINGRI: In old Sanskrit literature an instrument named as Kinnari finds place. It is possible that this same was changed to Kingri in Punjabi language.

5.2.11

THE SHAPE OF KINGRI: The dart of this instrument is two and a half feet long and is made of bamboo. It has two 'tumbas' and two strings. The lower tumba is covered with leather. On this tumba there is a small bridge which gives support to the wires. These days Kingari with two tumbas and two wires is not popular. 'Dhadis' (singers of Punjab) play Kingari with one wire and one tumba. They sing Vars with this instrument.²

In S.G G.S. a reference is made to this instrument in the following hymn composed by Guru Nanak:-

"Ghati Ghareet Baje Kinguri."³

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1. Gurmati Kirtan Vich Varte Gai Sajan Da P 284.
Sabhiacharak Ate Itihasak Pichhokar.
 2. Punjab Ki Sangeet Parampara, P 296-297.
 3. S.G G.S., P 62 Ml.

This indicates that Guru Nanak was also fond of this instrument.

GHUNGROOS:

5.2.12 ORIGIN OF GHUNGROOS: It is said that the sound of the Ghungroos gives piece of mind to a person. Man is in search of peace day and night. Nature has given sweet sounds to plants even. The origin of Ghungroos is said to be from the dry pods of the plants. When the human beings were happy they used to tie the dry pods to their feet. From here only the origin of Ghungroos can be traced. As the civilization developed, people started making the Ghungroos of metal.¹

5.2.13 SHAPE OF GHUNGROOS: Ghungroos are made of metal with round 'pallets' which produce musical sound when shaken. The metals used in Ghungroos are copper, brass and silver.² The Ghungroos which are used in dance should be of one metal.

The Ghungroos should be smaller in size so that these produce fine sound. In dance, Ghungroos are used not to give any particular swar but to maintain 'laya' and 'Tal'.

1. Ghungroo Ke Bol, P 1.

2. Ibid.

5.2.14 TYPES OF GHUNGROOS: The Ghungroos which produce five type of sounds are of small size. These are round in shape and are made of silver. These are used in ornaments by ladies and small children.

The Ghungroos which create loud sound are bigger in size. These are made of a metal called Bharat with two kalies. The sound produced by these is 'Tun-Tun' and 'Than-Than'. These are not used for entertainment purposes.

The Ghungroos made of brass and Bharat metal with four kalies are used for creating pleasant sound like 'Chan-Chan'. This type of sound produces Rasa. Fine decorative work is done on these Ghungroos. These are used in plays, dance performances and music items. The Rasa produced by these type of Ghungroos attracts general public and is very pleasing to hear.¹

Reference of these is found in the following hymn composed by Baba Nanak :-

"Ghungroo Baje Jei Manu Lage."²

1. Ghungroo Ke Bol, P 14-15.

2. S.G.G.S., P 356 Ml.

This shows that Ghungroos were used during the time of Baba Nanak.

MAJIRA (CYMBALS)

5.2.15 ORIGIN OF MAJIRA: The exact origin of Majira is not known, however, it is considered to be a very old instrument as it was played during religious songs in ancient times.

5.2.16 SHAPE OF MAJIRA: Majira is a percussion instrument. It consists of small circular discs made of bronze (a mixture of copper and zinc). The edges of Majira are thinner than the rest of the instrument so that when these are struck against each other, a musical sound is produced.¹

During the time of Guru Nanak this instrument was used in Bhajans and kirtans. Reference to it has been made by Guru Nanak in the following hymn:-

"Tal Madire Ghat ke Ghat."²

This shows that Guru Nanak was also fond of this instrument.

1. Bhartiya Sangeet Vadya, P 173.

2. S.G.G.S., P 349 M1.

To sum up, it may be said that the importance of musical instruments cannot be under estimated. These are essential items in dance and musical performances. These not only add flavour to music and dance but also make it melodious, presentable, attractive and help the performer in keeping with Laya and Tal. The music and dance without musical instruments would not only be lame but bleak. Baba Nanak was cognizant about the intrinsic value and importance of musical instruments and for that very reason the hymns recited by him were invariably accompanied with musical instruments.

C O N C L U S I O N

CONCLUSION

Dance began with the birth of living creatures. It is a natural expression of thought and emotion through body movements. The dance took its birth before man started speaking. It was through spontaneous rhythmical movements that he gave vent to his feelings of joy and sorrow. The animals, too, express their feelings through dance. In the primeval times the human wants were few and people lived in communities. A successful hunting, harvesting of good crop, marriage, birth of child and celebration of any happy event were the occasions when the community expressed its sense of happiness through dances.

Several fine arts like music and dance have been associated with worship making a holy union between art and divine. Religion has played a significant role in our culture. It has been instrumental in the development of growth and glorification of dance. Mahadeva (Lord Shiva) is the symbol of Dance. The institution of Devadasis (temple dancing girls) has its roots in worship of Divine. Lord Brahma, according to Hindu thought had codified the art of dance making it a fifth Veda. References to dance are found in the vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata and

Puranas. The religious ceremonies like horse sacrifice, Mahavarta Ceremony etc. were accompanied with dance. Saintly men in their unbounded love for God sang sacred hymns composed by them and danced in ecstasy to win the grace of Lord. They are, to name a few, Jayadeva Naryana Tirtha, Meera Bai, Gopal Krishna Bharti and Tukaram. Guru Nanak composed the hymns in various ragas which were sung in praise of God and are prescribed in Guru Granth Sahib. The Indian dance is full of spiritual power. It is said that Shri Chaitanya, who was a devotee of Lord Krishna, while singing in praise of Krishna, in fullness of ecstasy would be moved in the most graceful dance the world had ever seen.

The ideals and aesthetics on which the Hindu dance is based also influenced other arts like sculptures and paintings. The sculptural art was reflected in making the idols of Shiva, Vishnu, Indra and Lakshmi in the temples, making these not only places of worship but also of learning arts. It has rightly been pointed out in Vishnu Dharmotra Purana that to be a good sculptor one must have mastery of dancing. The dance in temples was performed with religious sentiments and for spiritual upliftment. However, the form and technique has been changing to suit the demands of

time and taste of people of various epochs. The nature of dance also differed in various parts of the country according to the geographical conditions, avocations and customs of the populace of various regions in India.

Detailed codification of this art is found in Natya shastra of Bharata which is said to have been written somewhere between second century B.C. to third century A.D. The dance Gurus, though, based their teachings on the technique as mentioned in Natya Shastra but they passed on the knowledge orally, and reserved the precious secrets of the art for a few selected disciples only.

During the period falling between 1st century to 5th century A D, four earliest great poets, namely Asvaghosa, Bhasa, Kalidasa and Sandroka made great contribution to the Indian classical literature. Copious references to dancing are found in their writings. Kalidasa extoled dancing as a feast pleasing the eyes of God.

The dance continued to play an important role in the lives of people in India, as it was closely related to religion and was used as one of the means to please Gods in temples with religious and spiritual sentiments. It was this reason that in temples devadasis were engaged who were supposed to lead an extre-

mly chaste and religious life in the service of God. However, temple dancing had an element of idol worship. Baba Nanak was opposed to idol worship.

References to various types of dances are found in Tamil literature of Sangam age which lasted from 500 B.C. to 500 A D, as well as in Buddhist and Jain literature.

The art of dancing was looked upon with great respect. So much so that even princesses in the Royal families used to learn this art. Rajyashree, King Harsha's sister learnt dancing from the very childhood.

King Jayapida of Kashmir who lived in the early part of 9th century married Kamla, who was a dancing girl. Similarly Chakravarman, ruler of Kashmir in mid 10th century married Husmi, a dancing girl, who became the principal queen. King Ananta of Kashmir, married Sahaja a devadasi, who committed sati on the death of her husband in 1089 A.D. These instances illustrate that art of dancing was held in high esteem in our ancient times. The art of dancing and singing reached its peak sometime in 1st and 2nd century and remained so, far nearly one thousand years.

Muslim invasions of India had a great dampening effect on this art, because they had a different cultural background and the art of dancing which was a

form of worship, had a rapid decline in its sanctity. The result was that it passed on to the professionals of lower class, who danced for the pleasure of the people who employed them. The ladies of respectable families did not dance.

However folk dances by the family members at the time of celebration of happy events like festivals, birth of a child and marriages etc, continued. The essential difference between folk dance and classical dance is that the former is done as an expression of emotion of the performer and the latter is done for the pleasure of the onlookers i.e. audience. Folk dances being essentially community dances, all persons participate irrespective of age and sex. The movements that developed under such circumstances had to be elementary footwork and simple beats.

Progressiveness is the human nature and folk dances, too, could not have remained outside the ambit of human genius of innovation. With the passage of time several permutations and combinations of community dances must have been tried, with the result that, we now find various types of folk dances all over India. There are dances with alternate positions of men and women, group dances of men and women making different patterns when dancing separately or together

on different kinds of drum beats with matching footwork. Various kinds of folk dances emerged depending on the location, climate, language, customs, festivals and attitude of people.

Bhangra, Gidda and Sammi dances of Punjab, Ghumar dance of Rajasthan, Garba of Gujarat, Naga dance of North East India are the examples of the manner in which the original folk dances have been refined and preserved to this day. It will be difficult to say with definiteness which folk dance gave rise to which classical dance and at which point of time in the history of India, but one can certainly say that whereas classical dances are ancient, one can definitely assert that folk dances preceded the classical dances. The persons with artistic talents assembled elements of beats and movements from different folk dances and pieced them together with refinement giving rise to classical dances. This process must have gone on in various parts of our country giving birth to different kinds of classical dances like Bharata Natyam in Tamil Nadu, Kuchupudi in Andhra Pradesh, Odissi in Orissa and Kathak in the Hindi speaking areas. Some of the patent differences between folk dances and classical dances are that classical dances are mostly performed solo; facial expressions occupy an

important place in it; there is stylised footwork on the basis of intricate patterns of Jatis; lots of thoughts are conveyed through mudras and costumes and jewellery for different forms of classical dances is specified. On the otherhand, folk dances are seldom performed solo and these are mostly group dances; facial expressions do not play any dominant role and foot movements are simple and repetitive. Mudras have no prominent role and there is the movement of hands to convey the thoughts. There is clapping and holding of hands of one another. The folk dancers perform the dances in their usual dress and form.

A question may arise as to why there is so much disparity in the development of the classical dances and development of the folk dances. The reason is the extent of patronage each received. It appears that the ruling chiefs were only interested to be entertained with folk dances when they went into the interior of their kingdoms on hunting expeditions etc but patronised classical dances in their courts. These traditions continued through the Mughal period. Devadasis, who were temple dancers, also performed classical dances and not folk dances. Virtually folk dances received no special patronage from the rulers and remained in a morbid state. It is now only that there is special drive to revive the folk arts and

dances and give them the rightful place in society as these reflect the cultural heritage of various regions.

The dance art which was held in high esteem and had a spiritual background received serious setback during the muslim period as the art of dance and music was opposed to their religious doctrines. It instead of being looked upon as a means of achieving spiritual joy, became an instrument of catering to sensual pleasures of the ruling chiefs.

During the British rule, too, the art of dance did not receive any patronage as a subject, with the result that the generation of 19th century was completely isolated with the art traditions of dance and what remained of it was the degenerated form of the art known as Nauch and became the preserve of the dooms and doomnis.

The period from January to December in whole of India including Punjab is punctuated with number of festivals besides the happy events in family like marriages etc. Some of the most important of these are Lohri, Basant Panchami, Shivaratri, Holi, Vaisahakhi, Teej, Raksha Bandhan, Janamasthmi, Dussehra, Diwali, Guru Nanak's birthday. All these festivals continued to be celebrated with music and dance despite the taboos which had arisen due to muslim influence, and folk dances continued to live.

Punjab is known for the following folk dances:

(i) Bhangra, (ii) Gidda, (iii) Jhumar, (iv) Sammi.
(v) Kikli, (vi) Luddi, (vii) Dandas, (viii) Raas Lila
etc.

There is no occasion, be it harvesting or sowing or marriage, or birth of a child which is not celebrated with music and dance. Not only Punjab has a rich culture of folk dances, but folk songs, folk tales, folk games, folk craft and folk dresses constitute a rich heritage of Punjab. These arts have been handed down from centuries and no man or woman was considered to be complete who was not proficient in these folk arts.

As the foreign invaders had to pass through Punjab on their way to Delhi, the result was that on every invasion the people of Punjab had to face the brunt of foreign (Muslim) tyranny. Muslim rulers exploited Hindu population, imposed personal taxes and demolished temples. Capital punishment used to be imposed for any criticism of Islam. Despite clashes between Hindus and Muslims on the basis of religion, their long co-existence influenced in shaping common beliefs and customs. Even during the reign of Sikandar Lodhi, who was a fanatic muslim, the cultural intercourse between Muslims and Hindus continued and in many respects their way of life was influenced. Hindus

came under the influence of muslim sufi order which preached universal brotherhood and love for all. The reapproachment between Hindu and Islamic ideas came into marked prominence in the later stages of Bhakti movement, particularly in the 15th century.

In 1469 Guru Baba Nanak, the founder of Sikhism was born in village Talvandi during the rule of Bholol Lodhi. He preached universal brotherhood. Folk dances which are the manifestations of inner impulses in man could not have escaped the notice of Guru Nanak. No doubt that in his verses he has not used the specific word 'folk dance' but we do find references to dance in his verses.

Baba Nanak composed hymns in various Ragas and the same used to be sung. Rabab was the instrument used by Mardana who was his constant companion, while reciting the hymns.

Music is said to have come from dance. Both music and dance have rhythm as their basis, and music cannot be divorced from dance. Guru Nanak described music as a means of attaining spiritual joy. In the same manner he had conceived of a dancing universe and he respected music and dance as an art of spiritual joy. The motive with which it is performed by human beings plays an important role. If it is performed for show and earning a livelihood, it loses its spiri-

tual significance. Guru Nanak has deprecated the performance of these arts which are devoid of feelings of devotion, and praised those which exhibit universally promoted intense love for God.

With regard to art of music, Guru Nanak says that a person who is devoid of joys of music cannot discriminate good from bad.¹ The praise of God should be sung with full understanding. He prohibits touching the feet of a person who sings song of God without understanding.²

Folk dance establishes a common culture and common language. It promotes fellow feelings. Folk dances are also well known for their religious fervour, and Guru Nanak whose main aim was to foster love between man and upliftment of mind in the spiritual field, could not have become unmindful of the impact of dance on human mind. In Asa, M.I at Page 350 of Adi Granth he emphasised the feelings and devotion with which dance should be performed to raise it to the level of mutual binding force. It should be performed with divine love in heart. Purified right feelings should be the instruments forming accompaniments of the dance. All the same he deprecated the

1. S.G.G.S., P 1246.

2. Ibid, P 1245.

mechanical dancing for livelihood as simple jumping and dancing without the element of intense love to God leads to no spiritual gain.¹ According to him the mind attuned to God is the true ringing of ankle bells in ritual dances.²

Guru Nanak's Shabads became very popular in Punjab and used to be sung with great devotion by the women folk and on the basis of these Bhajans Kinri, Jikra and Malda dances were composed.³ He preferred music as a mode of Nam Simran in place of dance. He was not against dance as such but as far as its utility in spiritual growth is concerned he could not advocate it. The most appropriate reason seems to be that in dance there is greater scope of pretentiousness hence commercialization.

1. S.G.G.S , P 465.

2. Ibid, P 356.

3. Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itihas, P 275.

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