

Project Work Submitted to

St. TERESA'S COLLEGE

in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS in BHARATANATYAM

By

SANJANA. S

M.A. BHARATANATYAM

SM22BHA009

2022-2024

THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS OF TANDAVA AND LASYA



AFFILIATED TO M.G UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF BHARATHANATYAM  
ERNAKULAM- 682 011  
KERALA

## CERTIFICATE

Certified that this project on “Theoretical application of Tandava and Lasya,” is a confident record of the work done by SANJANA.S (SM22BHA009), final year student of M.A Bharatanatyam at St. TERESA’S COLLEGE, Ernakulam.

MRS. BEENA. D  
HOD  
DEPT OF BHARATANATYAM

MR. SURESH KUMAR  
TEACHER IN CHARGE  
DEPT OF BHARATANATYAM

COLLEGE SEAL:

EXTERNAL EXAMINER:

THEORETICAL APPLICATION  
OF  
TANJAVA AND LASYA

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to God Almighty and my parents for their constant encouragement and support.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the Director Rev. Sr. Vineetha and Principal Dr. Alphonsa Vijaya Joseph of my college.

I am grateful to all the teachers and staff of the Department of Bharathanatyam at St. Teresa's College, the HOD, Dr. Beena D, and other faculty Mr Suresh Kumar, Ms. Ria V. R, Ms. Arunima J R, Mrs. Drishya Anil, and Mr. Chandrakumar PL who have been always highly co-operative and helpful throughout.

I am grateful to have wonderful classmates and I acknowledge each one of them for their support and who have helped me in this project.

SANJANA. S

## PREFACE

Paul Kurtz suggests that the Rig Veda gives evidence that dramatic theatre in India came into being around the 8th century BC. The art of Music and Dance which was well developed during Vedic age itself has been systematized by Bharata in his Natyashastra

Sanskrit Theatre was a traditional theatre of India which existed more than 1000 years, even before than Greek Theatre. The various ancient dramas were written in Sanskrit, and the tradition survived until the Muslim invasion in Northern India around the 8th Century.

Aristotle concentrated on the themes of tragedies as dramas while Bharata made a comprehensive handbook of all aspects of visual arts, including movements, expressions, theatre architecture, music, and the various kinds of drama. Both the Poetics and the NS begin with a "story of origin ": Aristotle's was seen as history while Bharata's as a myth. Both the books present its articulate theories of the structure, processes, and impact on spectators of the performing arts.

There were several authors like Parasara, Shilali, Kohala, Dantila, Thumbura, Narada Nandi, Shandilya who authored on the treatises of ancient dance and drama before Bharata's period which has been destroyed or no longer exists

According to Susan Schwartz, 'Natyashastra praises dramatic arts as a comprehensive aid to the learning of virtue, proper behaviour, ethical and moral fortitude, courage, love and adoration of the divine.' The text gives us the detailed explanation of performance arts, the nature of the playwrights, the performers, and the audience. The text describes the arts with mythologies associated with Hindu gods and goddesses. The fifth Veda, the Natya Veda was created as per requested by the Gods as the medium of entertainment, something that could be pleasing to the ear and eyes.

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# ABSTRACT

An attempt through this project has been made by me to highlight the true dimension and dynamics of Tandava and Lasya. It went under a major change during time to what we know in today's world of Indian classical dance.

The foremost important, being able to lift the audience and transcend them into a parallel realm of absolute truth. This bunch of paper is an attempt to re-discover and elucidate the intricacies of the text so that even laymen may easily appreciate its nuances.

According to the ancient literature Vishnudharmottara, it was Lord Vishnu who created the sublime Art of Dancing, which represents the three levels of existence in all the three worlds. The pure dance that is the Nrta, created by Vishnu was consisting of of Angaharas and Karanas is the absolute form of Dance; Natya as the depiction of the ways of the three worlds; and Nrtya the beautification factor to Natya. Thus, stating a connection between the three forms

Sage Markandeya states in Vishnudharmottara: One who is not aware of the laws of painting (Chitra) can never understand the laws of sculpture-making (Shilpa); and, that in turn, making it difficult to gain any knowledge of the technique of dancing (Nrtya); which makes it harder to understand without a thorough knowledge of the laws of instrumental music (Vadyam) without the prior knowledge of the vast art of vocal music. (Gana)

The main distinction between the Dance and painting is that the former has Tala and Kaala (Time) and, the latter has Rupa (form) and Mana-Pramana (proportions), while both has a similarity on having Dik (Space) and the human form being an instrument of expression. Dance (Nrta) endows life to sculpture (Shilpa).



# INTRODUCTION

It is said that in the Natyashastra, that it was after Tandu the word Tandava got its name. Tandava takes its name from Tandu, the disciple of Shiva, who was told to teach Bharata Muni the usages of Angaharas and Karanas elements of the Tandava. The Natya Shastra elaborates Shiva narrating about the various aspects of the dance to the Lord Brahma.

Bharata's Natya Shastra containing 36 chapters includes elements of drama, theatre, makeup actors, Rasa, and bhava, and is an encyclopaedic work on dramatic art. It is considered the fifth Veda- the Natya Veda since the Speech is extracted from Rigveda, Music is from Samaveda, nuances of Abhinaya from Yajurveda and the components of Rasa from Atharva Veda. The work composed between 200 BC to 200 AD has an elaborative sets of codified laws and rituals for dance and theatre.

The 32 Angaharas and 108 Karanas are discussed by Bharata in the 4th chapter of the Natya Shastra, Tandava Lakshanam. Karana is the combination of hand gestures with feet to form a dance posture. Angahara is composed of seven or more Karanas together.

Abhinavagupata's commentary on the dance treatise Natyashastra, is called the Abhinava Bharati. We observe a gamut of treatises post Natya Shastra period like Dananjaya's Dasarupaka, Sarangadev's Sangita Ratnakar, Nandikeshwara's Abhinayadarpanam, and medieval treatises of Kalidasa's work etc. These ancient texts contain dramaturgy with Rasa, Bhava, Tandava and Lasya, Nayika Nayaka's bhedas and components of drama with its several types.

# NATYOTPATI

The first chapter of Natya Shastra popularly known as Natyotpatti or the origin of dance contains around 130 slokas in total. The questions regarding the birth of Natya were asked by Sage Atreya and others sages about the current situations that lead to the creation of Natya, and Natyaveda. Some of the questions raised by sages to Brahma are; Natya was meant for whom? What are its types? What is its purpose? How is it practiced? but these questions are not answered in a sequential manner but spread across different passages under different chapters with its slokas in Sanskrit.

According to Brahma there is nothing is there that is not found or could be attained through Natya, as it encompasses sciences, rituals, philosophy, art, and all universally accepted concepts.

Nandikeshwara refers to the genesis of the natya featuring Lord Brahma who took Dialogue from the Rig Veda, Music from the Sama Veda, Abhinaya from the Yajur Veda, and Rasa from the Atharva Veda, to give shape to a new Veda called the Natya Veda.

A brief mythological interpretation of the genesis of natya follows based on the Natyashastra. It is stated that it was Lord Brahma who passed on the Natya Veda to sage Bharatha. Thereupon, Bharatha performed nritya, nritya and natya in front of Lord Shiva with the help of Gandharva's and apsaras.

Lord Shiva delighted with this, added the Tandava elements of dance but he felt that it lacked lusciousness and delicateness after which followed Parvati who gave him the graceful form of Lasya. The Tandava form descended to earth from sages who learnt it from Tandu and taught men, while Parvati taught Lasya to Usha, the daughter of Vaana, who in turn taught it to the women hailing from the Saurashtra region from where it spread to other places.

According to Bharata the term Tāṇḍava is a synonym for nṛtta. Nṛtta which was attributed to Lord Śiva and taught to Taṇḍu. Then he gave it life with appropriate music and musical instruments for presentation and thus it was known as Tāṇḍava.

Bharata gives the definition for the forceful Tāṇḍava as Uddhata prayoga and the graceful Lasya as Sūkumara prayoga. Though the movements are the similar mostly for tāṇḍava and lāsya, due to the innate differences in nature of their bodies, performance delivery of the male and female, may result in different effects when performed by the two genders.

Tāṇḍava is full of vigour and is complemented by lāsya, the graceful dance. They represent two sides of the same coin, the violent and the kind nature, that is, the dynamic male energy and feminine grace.

‘Lasya is the dance of the graceful variety and is intended to bring the emotion of love’. The lasya of Parvati is thus described: ‘At evening fall on the floor of Himalayan cave before the audience of Brahma and other heavenly gods and presided over Gandharvas damsels and the celestial apsaras performed the Melapaka and then accompanied the Lasya of the Goddess.

What did the ancient surmise about the purpose of this form as opposed to the vigorous Tandava? Lasya is to be practised by all sections of people who wish for auspiciousness, especially when starting on a long journey, at the birth of a child, wedding function and at the coming together of loving and beloved friends. This may be regularly performed in cities and households on all full moon days.

This story advocates the intermingling of two traditions in the evolution of theatre and dance. The dance tradition of India ascribed to the Vedic tradition of Lord Shiva has two aspects, the masculine and virile form called Tandava, taught by Tanduv, the disciple of Shiva, and Lasya the feminine and graceful form credited to Goddess Parvati.

Bharata has devoted one entire chapter called Tandava Lakshana to describe 108 karanas, the combined movement of hands and feet. Each karana consists of the gestures, postures, and movements of angas, the major limbs and pratyangas and the ancillary limbs. A combination of 4 to 8 karanas is called an angahara and the Natyashastra describes 32 of them though the exact dance notation of each is not given.

Of course, the descriptions found in Natyashastra and their representations found in temples belong to different period of time and hence are sometimes very different from the actual practice, which we come across in present day performances like the Bharatnatyam, but the basic orientation is more or less the same.

In Hindu mythology, Lasya refers to the dance innovated and performed by the goddess Parvati, described to be gentle and graceful. Described in the Natya Shastra, the feminine Lasya danced by Parvati is contrasted by the masculine Tandava dance of her consort, Shiva.

Described as the prototype of all female dancing, the Lasya is danced in a variety of forms, most of which comprise the small and seductive motions of the feet. Some forms of the Lasya consist of the rapid succession of minor steps, regarded to be erotic. An example of this dance is the Mohiniyattam of Kerala.

## DIVINE ORIGINS OF TANDAVA

It is significant that the representations of the Karanas are found in some of the great temples of south like Chidambaram, Brihadeshwara and Kumbakonam.

The Chidambaram temple origin is contained in the 12th-century text of Chidambaramahatmya. The central episode states that Shiva visits sages in the mythical forest in the form of a dancer ascetic accompanied by Mohini (Vishnu). Mohini seeds lustful interest of the sages, while Shiva performs Tandava dance that triggers the physical interest of the wives of these sages. The sages ponder over their austerities. The episode becomes widely known.

Two sages named Patanjali (snake form) and Vyaghrapada (also called Tiger-footed sage) want to see the repeat performance of this "dance of bliss" in the Thillai Forest of Chidambaram. They pray to Shivalinga and meditate. This impresses Shiva who appeared before them in Chidambaram and performed "the dance", leading to the foundation of the Chidambaram Nataraja temple, in the Tamil Sthalapurana.

According to another Hindu legend, once Shiva and his consort Parvati wanted to declare who among them was a better dancer. They wanted their sons Ganesha and Murugan to judge their performances. Both judged in favour of Parvati, which Shiva was not satisfied.

He requested Lord Brahma to judge, and the competition was held in Thiruvalangadu. Since Brahma was still not quite sure of himself, wanted Vishnu to judge, and the latter wanted the competition at Tillaivanam. Shiva performed the Urthva tandavam pose of picking his earring with his legs, and wearing them in the ear with his legs. Parvati was not able to achieve the same. Upon seeing this, Vishnu got impressed and declared Shiva as the winner. Parvati got angry at her defeat, hence became Kali at the Thillai Kali temple.

# NATYASHASTRA

Chapter IV of the Natyashastra is called the Tandavalakshanam and the generic term Tandava consists of combining the Rechaka (movement of a limb), the Angahara (sequence of karanas) and the Pindi (group formation) with song and instrumental music.

As per Natyashastra,

- Tandava is a general term that cannot be understood as denoting vigorous dancing.
- It cannot be decoded as being performed by men alone. The dance movements were steered by the character's psychological levels in play. The sole purpose for its divisions of dance movements was the value and the nature of the feeling of the character despite the gender.
- The above mentioned nritya was meant for the adoration of the gods.
- Tandava's tenderer aspect Lasya was to be accompanied by the Shringara rasa.
- the Nritya was pure dance. It was not an offshoot of Natya. It was non-dependent Art-form, which was performed before the beginning of the play in the Purvaranga, as a dance offering to gods.
- The Tandava was described Nritya (pure dance) with accordance to motion; and, it was not necessarily violent; nor was it performed only by men.

The Tandava in the Natyashastra did not have the meaning of Uddhata (Vigorous) or Tandava-nritta in any way.

- The graceful dance (Sukumara-prayoga) containing graceful movements (Angaharas) performed by Goddess Parvathi did not differ drastically from Shiva's Tandava. Sukumara-prayoga or Lasya did not mean a feminine style of dancing as these discrepancies between masculine and feminine dances, were not done in the Natyashastra.
- As Bharata in his Natyashastra did not make any clear theoretical division of nritta into Tandava and later, came to be known as Lasya. It purely was discussed according to the nature of the scope of its movements irrespective of the gender. For example, the term Lasya, is not mentioned in the Natyashastra, though the relevance of grace and beauty did exist, and was termed as Sukumara.
- Bharata has not confined Tandava and Lasya to male and female respectively but later treatises after his period started treated Lasyangas confining to female dancers' angika and nritta as suitable.
- Bharata formed a new expressive form of Dance by intermingling the scope of the Nrtta extending to Abhinayas, to which he had not coined or defined it.

## Observations of Kapila Vatsayan on Bharata's Natayashastra

In the field of medieval treatises, Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan has cited the Abhinaya Darpana and Sangeet Ratnakar as significant examples which further helps us understand Bharata's Natyashastra. The Abhinaya Darpana is a text on dance and drama, a commentary of the Natyashastra attributed to Nandikeshwara, dated between the 6th to 11th centuries. Sangeet Ratnakar meaning 'Ocean of Music and Dance', was authored by Sarangdeva in the 13th century CE which deals dance, drama, and music.

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan states that according to these two, as well as the and other medieval treatises, dance was given an independent status. It is a generic category termed Natanam and is divided into three distinct categories, i.e. Natya, Nritya and Nritta.

She explains that Natya here corresponded to drama, Nritya to dance performed to song, and Nritta to pure dance where the movements of the body do not express bhava. These texts also illustrate dancing as Tandava and Lasya where it is attributed to males and to females respectively.

Dr. Kapila explains that Bharata used Natya as a generic term. Bharata had identified the category of Nritta as pure movement without meaning. He divided it into Uddhata and Sukumara as modes of rendering. He did not specifically impose these to a male or female and the Karanas in Uddhata and Sukumara could be performed by either.



# LAYSYANGAS

Lasyangas refer to the elements of gentle dance according to Natyashastra of Bharata. The term 'Lasyanga' is made of two words – 'Lasya' and 'Anga.' Lāsya according to Bharata is a graceful dance, which is an aṅga of the dramas. The later works describe these dances in various ways.

'Lasya' means a tender or graceful dance, depicting radiance, happiness, and feminine energy.

In classical Indian music, rhythm or the tala is given utmost importance like any other music. It is made of two parts – 'ta' stands for tandava and 'la' stands for lasya. This means that tala is the brainchild of Lord Shiva-Parvati themselves and for which is believe that Tandava was performed by Lord Shiva while Lasya by Goddess Parvati.

Lāsyaṅga is a singular play where Lāsya is dominated in its delicate form of representation. 'Lāsyam aṅgam yasyaḥ tat' meaning that which which has lāsya as its principal element. It also says that the they are to be presented by a single character like in Bhana and, not by a group of characters. The ten Lāsyaṅgas seem to have so many varieties of the Lāsya.

The emotional theme in the Lasya is a product of the poet's imagination, Uhya. Bharata again says, the Lasya is related to Srngara rasa, revealing love, and other graceful aspects. Lasya is present in Vithi, which appears in the Prahasana. Since Vithi and Prahasana also starts in the first of three parts of the Samavakara, all of these together with Lasya and its Angas appears in the Nataka.

The Natyashastra does not clearly define Lasya but Bharatamuni roughly describes ten types of Lasyangas as follows

1. Geyapad: The heroine in this lasyanga sits and sings a song for entertaining the hero while playing the stringed instruments and drums she is surrounded by, although she prefers to sing without accompaniment of any of these. It is a simple rendering of a song, melody based.
2. Sthitapathya: The heroine who is deeply in love reads and sings a sad song as in Prakrit pining for her lover, while resting on her seat. She cannot bear the pangs of separation
3. Aasin: the forlorn heroine expresses the emotion of parting from a loved one being lonely, ruminating over her situation. Instrumental music is not used in this song of performance. And, she is not interested to listen to any sort of music.
4. Pushpagandika: Here, the heroine disguises like her lover and converses among her sakhis for fun. Application of chari, angahaar, etc is done.
5. Prachhed: It describes the song of separation in the night scene. During the night, the actress feels sad and disappointed because of her unfaithful lover, and whiles away time looking at the moon and the stars feeling lonely. They forgive each other's mistake while still being apart and longs to be together soon.
6. Strigudh: In this Lasyanga performance, the heroine is impressed praises the hero's bravery. Sometimes, this Lasyanga can show anger too.

7. Saindhavakhya: This Lasyanga depicts how the actress as a Vipralabdha nayika. In this, the actor calls the actress at a pre fixed meeting, but however, does not turn up. The disappointed actress feels cheated and betrayed as the actor does not keep up his word that he had given to her. She dances displaying various Karanas, with grief to the Prakrit music.
8. Dvigudhak: This Lasyanga describes different auspicious events in a very detailed and interesting style. In it a song of the Caturasra pada, set in four kaalas ; with a proper beginning (Mukha) and elaboration (Prathi-mukha); filled with celebration of joy and expressions of love ,that is sung by the heroine herself.
9. Uttamottama: the heroine sings a love song when they finally meet that describes the characteristics of Kama dev, depicts the expressions of the different shades of love.
10. Vichitrapad: Here, the actress paints a picture of her lover, and feels sad as she isn't accompanied by him.
11. Uttaprayukt: It is showcased as a duet on stage. In this Lasyanga, both the nayaka and the a nayika ask questions of each other and have a conversation full of speeches and counter-speeches full of flirtation, argument and sarcasm leaving the audience with joy and love.

Abhinavagupta recognizes only the above ten forms of Lasyanga although he had mentioned two other types. He did not accept the two other forms – Chitrapada and Bhavita – for, he thought that they might have been introduced into the text later.

## POST- BHARATA PERIOD

- Nrta was classified into what we now know as the Tandava and Lasya accordingly. Tandava was explained as forceful and fast paced with furious elements of the Tandava Nrta romanticized as a dance having the potential of extreme Rasa of Rudra.
- Sukumara Prayoga was re-constructed as Lasya, the soft (Lalita) form of dance.
- Considering the two forms, it was said to be emanating masculine and feminine energies; sidelining Tandava for men, while Lasya for women.
- Later, it came to be popularly known as Nrtya while it however does not appear in the Natyashastra, its concept was still alive.)
- Further, new concepts were welcomed to the additional vocabulary of Dance under broader categories, such as: Marga (pure or classical) and Desi (regional or stylised); also, as Nibaddha (structured) and Anibaddha (free-flowing).
- The medieval age of Indian classical dance observed a steady influx in the influence of regional folk dances into the classical art form. Several traditional elements and techniques got mixed into the old stream, giving rise to many other Dance forms, from different regions across the diverse plane of the country. Each style stood different from each other having distinct identity and methods of presentation. In short, the dance practitioners in their regions also developed their own local vocabulary.

- Thus, Tandava, helped in revealing the antagonistic character through (Uddhata) and their displays. The same also applies with Lasya, the gentle dance (Lalita).
- The principal distinction between Uddhata and Lalita also proposes a difference between the masculine and feminine modes of expression; due to their innate physical characteristics, and since there was an association of both the styles with a male and a female Hindu deity. It became obvious without any doubt of the notion that the term Lasya means a dance, which only can be practised by females.

## VARIOUS MEDIEVAL AUTHORS

### ❖ Sarangadev

The Sangita-Ratnakara, literally "Ocean of Music and Dance", is one of the most important musicological texts from India. Composed by Śārīṅgadeva in Sanskrit during the 13th century, regard it as a definitive text of Indian classical art form.

Sangeet Ratnakar is also called 'Saptadhyayi' as it consists of seven chapters while the last chapter called the 'Nartanadhyaya' devotes few concepts of tandava and lasya. The author was a part of the court of King Simhana of the Yādava dynasty whose capital was Devagiri, Maharashtra. Through the medium of this treatise, but he also brought into limelight the knowledge about ancient forms of Svaras, Ragas, Jati, nritta, Tala, dance prabhandas etc.

Sarangadeva in his Sangita Ratnakara has mentioned Tandava as Uddhata that requires force and Lasya as Lalitha that requires gentleness. Nartanadhyaya consists of two portions. In the first portion, he gives three terms in the context of dance – Natya, Nritya and Nritta.

Natya and Nritya are explained to be performed during festivals and Nritta during events such as coronation of kings, wedding ceremony, childbirth, and other auspicious occasions. Natya depends on Vachika abhinaya, Nritya on bodily expression whereas Nritta on body movements and foot work based on rhythm. 'Nritta' has been used in context of music.

Two types of Nritya and Nritta have been mentioned, viz – Tandava and Lasya. Tandava is the vigorous and Lasya is the mellow form created by Shiva and Parvati respectively and described by Tandu.

tāṇḍava lāsya mityētaḍ dvaya dvēdhā nigadyatē||  
vardhamānāsāritādyairgītaistattadadhṛvāyutam|  
karanaīraṅgahāraśca prādhānyēna pravartitam||  
tāṇḍūkttamuddhataprāyaprayōga tāṇḍava matam|  
lāsya tu sukumārāṅga makaradhvajavardhanam||

The Lasyaangas mentioned in Natyashastra are the topics under the category of natya, while those mentioned in the Sangita-Ratnakara are for nritya only. This is the reason why the Lasyaangas of Sangita-Ratnakara is more of abhinaya and theatre oriented. It involves detailing in every minute movements.

The Sangita-Ratnakara mentions 10 different Lasyaangas:

1. Chaali: is the simultaneous movement of the limbs, thighs, torso etc. It is soft, graceful, and attractive, in according to the Talas and neither too quick nor too slow, and mostly medium tempo.
2. Chaalivad: When the chaali Lasyanga is done at a repeatedly faster pace, it becomes chaalivad lasyanga.
3. Ladhi: the simultaneous movement of the hips and the arms, which is soft, oblique, and graceful

4. Suka: When the dance is performed wearing the karnabhushan, then it is called as suka. In the same manner, the dance with frequent pauses and yet fast in pace, and the movement of the ear ornaments worn is extremely captivating. Suka is full of feminine charm (Hava).
5. Urongann: The dance has pauses and at done at fast pace with beautiful movements of the shoulders and the chest with slanting expressions. The graceful oblique movement, of the breasts and the shoulders is called Uronganna.
6. Dhasaak: the chest movements hence done are called as dhasaak.
7. Othaar: slow and slated movements of the head is called as othaar. Othaar is the slightly oblique, downward movement of the head.
8. Aingahaar: The movements of half the body, full of rhythm, in an orderly manner like dhatushya, is called as angahaar. The gradual bending of the two halves of the body in the form of a bow, gracefully to time is Angahara.
9. Mann: When a sthayi pace is got from the very start of the performance, and the dance is performed to match this pace, is called as mann. Mana is accepted to be that which has the tempo of the Sthaya belonging to songs.
10. Vihasi; The acting and dance filled with Sringara rasa that captivates the audience, is called as vihasi Lasyanga. Vihasi is the smile which is full of the sentiment of rati , which is different from the normal Hasita, and which is really subtle.



These are the ten types of Lasyanga are listed and elaborated in the Sangit Ratnakar. If closely observed in detail, we can conclude that it is a dance form that is performed only by women. It is performed in sync with the rhythm and delicate tempo making extremely sweet and enjoyable since the raja rasa Sringara is used through different portrayals. The music utilised is also devotional and love songs.

## ❖ ABHINAVAGUPTA

the Abhinavabharati is the earliest available commentary on the Natyashastra; and, is, therefore, highly valuable. Abhinavabharati is a bridge connecting between the world of the ancient and forgotten wisdom of the succeeding generations.

Abhinayadarpanam commences with a salutation to Lord Shiva in which the whole world is portrayed as the bodily movement of the Him, Angikaabhinaya, Vachikaabhinaya, and Ahayaabhinaya, and the very essence of the Lord as the abode of emotive acting.

Abhinavagupta says Tandava is synonymous to Nritya and is divided into Sukumara and Uddata. He has laid 7 stages for development of nrityas.

There was no mention of Nritya and Lasya by Bharata and Abhinavagupta. Therefore, the terms Nritya and Lasya do not appear either in the Natyashastra or in its early commentaries. Even Abhinavagupta is observed to not using the term Nritya. It was only later after his period that Nritya gained an independent identity as an emotional representational Art, which surpasses human experiences, with fluidity and grace.

Abhinavagupta brings in few classifications into Nritya with many other new factors He brings the elements of Artha and Abhinaya; the variations of Tandava and Sukumara; the concept of male and female forms of Nritya; and Rasas, the sentiments, or emotions they bring out.

Thus, the concept and the content of the Nritya, as quoted in the Natyashastra, is almost entirely not followed; and is given a perspective by succeeding authors.

Abhinavagupta was the person behind making notion of Tandava and Sukumara to male (Purusha) and female (Stri) dances popular and introduced it first. But, such gender-based impositions cannot be found in the Natyashastra.

It has four types: (1) Uddhata Nrta ;(2) Masrana-Nrta; (3) Misra Uddhata Nrta; and (4) Misra-Masarna Nrta.

All these four types do require Abhinaya (as in the Nrtya), the Abhinaya, according to Abhinavagupta, is the acting of the dancer conveying the meaning or the padartha of the song through expressions of Angikabhinaya, giving sense to the details of the composition.

- the Uddhata Nrta is a dance with heat and strength displaying vigorous movements of Tandava and is associated with Veera and Roudra Rasas. This is a masculine type of dance.
- Masrana-Nrta is of Lasya tradition, affiliated with Srngara, Karuna rasas. This is the feminine type of dance.
- Misra Uddhata Nrta, is important because there is a mixture of Uddhata and that of the Masrana or Lasya.
- Misra- it is mixed with some lighter elements of Uddhata

Similarly, though Tandava is mentioned as Nrta; it cannot be equalled to the term Tandava-nrta, he just mentions it as Udhata. Both Tandava and Sukumara come under the umbrella of Nrta – the pure Dance, devoid of abhinaya or sentiment but he also explains the Sukumara as that of Devi being ‘beautified with emotion and sattva.’

The ancient commentaries that followed that of Abhinavagupta continued to use the above-mentioned terminologies of the Natyashastra. The justification of its basic terms such as, Nrta, Natya, Tandava and Lasya still remained inconsistent during his period, as they were elaborated variously, in several ways, depending upon the knowledge and situation of the author.

## ❖ JAYA SENAPATI

Nritta Ratnavali of Jaya Senapati mentions Desi Lasyangas are core of Lasya tradition in Andhra Pradesh. It describes that Lasya is performed by women and Tandava by men. Lasyangas are the inner core of Uparupakas.

Jaya Sena lists ten forms of Lasyanga which are the same as in Natyashastra – ‘Lāsye daśa-vidhaṃ hyetad-aṅganirdeśa-lakṣaṇam.’

The Lasyangas, according to Jaya Sena, are the elements of the traditional forms of Dance of Marga style. Jaya Sena accepts the Lasyangas as per Bharata’s presentation, except the two other Vichitrapada and Bhavika pada. Nritta Ratnavali describes the Desi –Lasya, the regional variations of the Lasya which are forty-six in number, entirely based on Angika movements, with very little Vachika element.

Jaya Senani defines Lasya and Tandava as the two varieties of Nr̥tta and Nr̥tya. According to him the Lasya, is a feminine dance style, which produces the Sringara Rasa with its delicate and graceful movements. Shiva taught this dance style to his consort Parvati.

Tandava, a pure Nr̥tta with no trace of Abhinaya, is a vigorous type of dance, performed briskly and aggressively, that produces Veera and Bhayanaka Rasas. In the Desi Nr̥tta, Tandava is used to represent the warriors performed only by men to showcase fight, war, or quarrel.

The presentation of them is mainly through the Angika, with hardly any notice of Vachika Abhinaya. The Nr̥ttaratnavali praise Lasya, the graceful delicate dance performed by women; equally as the Perani, a subordinate form of Tandava.

He then describes the term Perani, that was derived from 'Prerana' meaning inspiration. And, Perani is one who is inspired by the dance of Lord Shiva; which invokes (Prerana) and is dedication to Him.

A Perani ,a dancer, having the potential of uplifting the spectators to ultimate aesthetic experience, knows both the Lasya and Tandava Dance forms; and who is expert in the Karanas having high demanding leaps , turns and spins accordingly.

## ❖ NANDIKESHWARA IN BHARATARNAVA

The Bharatarnava, in its Chapter Thirteen, describes seven types each of Tandava and Lasya. The names of some of the Lasya can be found mentioned in other texts of authors, of Sarangadev, Jayasenapati etc. The Tandavas mentioned here are unique comparing to any other texts.

The seven Tandavas of the Nrta group mentioned in Bharatarnava are: Dakshina-brahmana; Vama-brahmana; Lila-brahmana; Bhujhanga-brahmana; Vidyuth -brahmana; Lata-brahmana; and Urdhva-Tandava. They are Tandava Dance movements used in the Nrtya and in Natya.

Nandikeshwara in his book Bharatarnavam categorises both Tandava and Lasya into Margi and Deshi. The deshi Lasya has 7 types namely Perini, Kundali, Prekhani, Dandalasya and Kalashslasya

The Desi Tandava described in this text has five different varieties, namely: Nikuncita; Kuncita; Akuncita, Parsva-kuncita and Ardha-kuncita; and, they use five specific Gatis, five specific Caris and five specific Karanas.

The text also talks about seven types of Lasyas, which are meant to enhance the beauty of the Caris. They can be either pure Marga or Desi. They are known as Suddha, Desi, Prerana; Prekhana, Kundali, Dandika (dhanalasya) and Kalasa.

## ❖ NANDIKESHWARA IN ABHINAYADARPANA

Abhinayadarpana stands in the forefront of manuals on dance in Sanskrit because of its comprehensive treatment of all the aspects of it. Though its scope and range are somewhat limited in comparison with Natyashastra the fact remains that there is no handy text on dance like it, especially in relation to angika abhinaya on which the entire gamut of movement hinges in Indian dance. It is not surprising therefore that the work has acquired some sort of an authority in dancers like in Bharatnatyam.

Nandikeswara in his Abhinaya Darpanam describes seven types of Tandava which are believed to have been performed by Lord Shiva.

1. Sandhya Tandava: Lord Shiva performed this tandava when the world was poised between lasting day and the oncoming darkness of the night. The 'apasmaran' is absent. The left hands hold peacock feather and vismaya pose in which the palm is held up but its fingers bent forward a little curved. It is held that Sandhya Tandava protects all.

A story is told about this in one of the verses of Agamattirattu in Tamil: "Lord Shiva swallowed the poison and was quiet without saying anything for a moment. The Devas were worshipping for him without any pause. That was a day was an Ekadasi. Devas broke their fast the next day and became perfect. He placed the gold creeper of Himavan on the head, and danced whirling the trident. The four Vedas speak of it as Pradosa". This was performed under the banyan tree. This is found represented in the Lalita mode of dance

2. Ananda Tandava: It is the most popular of Lord Shiva found in every temple. He is ash-smearred, with four arms; the right back arm holds the 'utukkai' or the damaru; the left back arm holding the fire; the right front arm is the abhaya pose or the pose of protection; the left front arm is in gajahasta pose and the left leg which is raised or tilted above in aramandi. The ecstasy of the dance, in whirling on one leg is shown by the matted hair and the snakes around him forming a circle.

'Erukku' (Madar) and 'Umattam' (Datura) flowers, crescent moon, human skulls are on the left matlocks; Ganga is on the right. The cloth, partly tied round the waist and partly thrown over the left shoulder, flies up in the air. The head of Shiva wears peacock feathers and this characterises this murti's crown. The right leg is slightly bent, placed upon the apasmara. The pedestal of the figure is a double lotus flower while the prabha of flames of fire is surmounted in a round.

According to Natya sastra,

Kuncitam padamutksipya tryasramurum vivartayet|  
Kapijanu vivarttau ca bhujahgatrasi tam bhavet ||

i.e., 'One leg is bent in a triangular way and lifted. The body above the hip and the knee are slightly turned on one side'. Abhinavaguptacarya explains the term thus: 'This kind of dance is called Bhujanga trasa, because in it, the dancer suddenly lifts up his leg as though he saw a snake very near him and appears to be on an instable poise. In this, one arm is in dolahasta and the other in the kataka pose'.

3. Kalika Tandava: Shiva has two eyes and of 8 arms of which the three, on the right, holds the Msula, pasa and utukkai, the three on the left hold kapala, fire and the



bull, whilst the remaining right arm is held in an abhaya pose and the left in gajahasta pose. In this figure 'muyalakan' sits facing front. The drum is held nearer to the ear, and His head slightly towards it. This Tandavam according to Tirupputtur-ppuranam performed at Thiruvallangadu, image available at that place is that of Urdhva Tandava. The Tiruvalankattu-ppuranam states of the Lord standing on His right leg and sending up His left leg pointing to the Heavens, that seen at Agastisvaram temple.

4. Uma Tandava. Shiva has six hands, i.e., two more to what had been already mentioned. The other right hand holds trisula, and a skull on left. While the left leg is placed on Apasmara, the right leg tilted to the right. Umadevi positions herself on the left of Shiva.

The Dance of marriage is narrated as a separate dance and is known as the Dance of the Dances, the Uma Tandava. In describing the Sandhya Tandava, the Tamil work Agamattirattu, mentions a Trisula; perhaps because of this, Gauri Tandava is also sometimes known as Sandhya Tandava.

5. Gauri Tandava. This similar like the Ananda Tandava. The important feature is the holding of the serpent in one of the left hands. Mayamata describes this as Bhujanga lalita, probably because of the playing with the serpent held in one hand. In this dance Nandi is present on the right and Gauri on the left side.

6. Tripura Tandava: This is the Tandava performed by Shiva after killing the following demons, Tarakakasha, Veeravana and Vidyunmali. He vanquished the rakshasas riding the earth as his chariot, Sun and Moon as the wheels, Adishesha as the rope, Meru as the bow, Lord Vishnu as the arrows, four vedas as his horses and Lord Brahma as the charioteer. By destroying these demons, he freed the three worlds from casted evil. Shiva is represented with 16 arms. There is Goddess Parvati on the left and Murugan on the right. This dance is described in the Tripura Dahana.
  
7. Samhara Tandava: This is the dance of annihilation and involution. Shiva is believed to have performed this when Sati burned herself in ashes. Shiva in anger performed the so vigorously that the other heavenly lords feared destruction of the three worlds. Only when Lord Bramha, Lord Vishnu and Devas appealed to him he returned to normalcy. He is represented with 3 eyes and 8 arms. The left leg crushes down the demon Apasmara and the right leg is raised. The right hands are holding the Utukkai, the pasa, the trisula and the abhaya pose and the left hands hold the fire, the skull, the vismaya and gajahasta poses accordingly. We can observe here also Nandi on the right and Gauri on the left. The eight hands in this form differentiate from Gauri Tandava.

## ❖ MANASOLLASA

The title Manasollasa is a Sanskrit word, consisting of two words manas or "mind" and ullasa or "delighting". The Mānasollāsa also known as Abhilashitartha Chintamani, dates back to the early 12th-century Sanskrit text composed by the Kalyani Chalukya king Someshvara III, who reigned in present-day Karnataka . It is a vast dictionary work which elaborates various topics such as governance, astrology, rhetoric, architecture, arts, dance, and music etc.

The author mentions the subject of dancing by saying that dances should be performed at every festive occasion, to celebrate win against war, as well as on occasions of joy, passion, marriage, birth of an offspring and renouncement etc.

Someshwara uses the term Nartana to denote Dancing, in general, covering six types: Natya (dance with Abhinaya), Lasya (graceful dance), Tandava (vigorous), Visama (acrobatic), Vikata (comical) and Laghu (light and graceful). Manasollasa also categorised four broad groups of dance forms: Nrtya, Lasya, Marga and Desi.

Manasollasa is also significant to the theory of Dance, because it caused classifying the whole of dancing into two major classes:

- Marga: the traditional that which is practised according to the conventional rules
- Desi: types of unregulated dance forms with their regional variations).

The other authors and his contemporaries such as Sarangadeva, Pundarika Vittala and others followed the classifications given Manasollasa in his book.

## ❖ OTHER TREATISES

The Sangita Upanishad Saroddhara is a treatise on music and dance written in the fourteenth century (1350 A.D.) by the Jaina writer Sudhakalasa. The text is composed in six chapters, the first four of which are on Gita or music, Vadya and on Taala. The last two chapters are related to dancing.

The term he uses to denote dance is Nrtya. His view point of the three terms Nrta, Nrtya and Natya broadly differs from that of his predecessors. According to him, Nrta is performed by men, Nrtya by women, while Natya is Nataka, performed by both men and women.

His dealing with the movements of the feet (pada-karmas) and the postures (Sthanakas) differs from that of other dance treatises. His theory also includes distinctions such as; Sthanas are postures meant for women while, Sthanakas are postures meant for men. According to the Jain author, Karanas are components of Lasyangas and Nrtya. Obviously, he was paving a contemporary practice, without specific reference to the previous texts and traditions.

In the Vishnu darmottara (5th century) nrta is said to enhance the beauty of natya. It is of two types natya and lasya. The texts mention Lasya can be performed under a pavilion or at open space while Natya was allowed only within an enclosed space. Abhyantara and bahya are the two divisions. Abyantara is rigid in structure having codified rules while Bahya has no rules and is “lakshana vivarjitam” always auspicious.

Nrta consist of two kinds according to this text sukumara which is graceful and is mainly performed by women and viddha, or uddhata mainly performed by men. The ideal nrta is a package of rasa and bhava. It adheres to tala, kaya, rasa and gita and promotes dharma and righteousness.

In the period beginning with the sixteenth century, Pundarika Vittala introduced the new concept of classifying dance forms into two separate classes, as the Bhaddha (structured) and Anibhaddha (neither bound nor structured). The later texts, while discussing Dance, apart from following Marga and Desi classification, also took into consideration Nartana-nirnaya's classification of Bhaddha and Anibaddha, as a part of their conceptual framework.

## ❖ DHANANJAYA IN HIS DASARUPAKA

One of the most important contributions of Dhananjaya is the distinction he makes between Nrta and Nrtya. He explained Nrta depends on rhythm and tempo (Nrtaṁ tala-laya ashrayam); and Nrtya is dependent on emotion (Bhavashrayam Nrthyam). And, Dhananjaya was also the first writer to use the term Nrtya to denote mimetic dance and dance-dramas.

Under each of these (Nrtya and Nrta) there is again a two-fold division: Lasya, the graceful, gentle and, Tandava, the vigorous, energetic and brisk invigorating movements

Further, Dhananjaya's classification of Nrtya as belonging to the Marga (pure) tradition; and, Nrta as the Desi (regional) popular dance form, was also very significant, though it marked a deviation from Bharata.

The Angavikshepa, the throwing of limbs is, however, common to both Nrta and Nrtya. Yet, Dhananjaya remained anchored in Bharata's opinion that both Nrta and Nrtya are both sub aides to Drama.

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However, this was idea criticized later by scholars as being irrational. It was pointed out that Nrta was the dance that Shiva taught to his disciple Tanduv; and hence was pure and pristine, which makes Nrta obviously of the Marga class.

The trend that Dhananjaya set in, categorizing Nrta and Nrtya respectively as Desi and Marga, was taken up and continued by the later scholars such as Sarangadeva , Pundarika Vitta and such others.

Dhananjaya has defined natya as avastanukritih that is imitation of various mental states of the characters. The nrtya is dancing related to the bhavas or emotional states; mere rhythmic dance tuned to time beats is called nrta.

‘Anyat bhavashrayam nrityam nrittam thalalayenvittam’

Regarding tandava and lasya, Dasarupaka states that tandava and lasya, the stately and the tender respectively, are useful in plays like nataka.

Dhananjaya in his Dasharupaka states that all dance whether nritta or nritya is divided into lasya and tandava based on their respective sweet and grand nature.

Further, under, the interpretation provided by Dhananjaya, Nritta was classified depending on the nature of the physical movements. It seemed that vigorous Tandava and soft Lasya were related to masculine and feminine dancers, respectively; suggesting that Tandava is for men, while Lasya is for women. But, the Nritta in the Natyashastra did not envisage such discrimination.

Again, such an interpretation also suggests a distinction and between masculine and feminine modes of expression. And, that led to mistaking the term Lasya to mean a feminine style of dancing, which lends grace to stage actions.

The definitions he provided of the terms such as Nrtta, Nrtya, Tandava and Lasya mark a distinct stage in the evolution of the understanding of dance and drama.

## VRITTIS

Dr. Raghavan also brings in the significant role of Vrttis (styles of presentation) in the process of the growth and development of Dramatic forms. In that context, he says: “Just as the dance forms, based on Lalitya and Auddhatya, are differentiated into Lasya and Tandava; similarly, the ten Rupakas , get divided into Lalita and Uddhata groups.

According to Dr. Raghavan, Bharata splits the Dasarupa, the ten forms of Dramas, into two broad groups, based on the characteristics of the Vrittis they depict: either Kaisiki which has the elements of lasya and Arabhati which contains the elements of tandava.

He explains; the Arabhati-vrtti, a loud, and energetic style, which is suitable for exhibition of one’s anger, valour, bordering on false-pride, uproar etc., represents the haughty Uddhata or the Tandava aspect. Therefore, tandava can be seen more dominant in the types of Rupakas, such as Ihamrga, Dima, Vyayoga and Samavakara, depicting fights amongst Devas and Asuras

And, the Kaisiki-vrtti (graceful-style) – illustrating the softer expressions of love with graceful dances, melodious songs with charming costumes and delicate actions. Therefore, lasya can be seen most foremost in the rupakas such as Nataka and Prakarana in it advanced stages. Sringara-rasa and Lasyangas is an important attribute of the Lasya aspect.

In short, Dr.Raghavan suggests that: the well-structured and sophisticated forms of Drama (Nataka and Prakarana) were evolved through a process of refining or eliminating the unwanted elements found in the other forms of Dramas.

Saradatanya’s Bhavprakash treatise connects the terms Vrittis and Nritta elements like karanas, angaharas or charis. For e.g.: Lalit angahara infused with Kaishiki Vritti.



# MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

## ▪ Kumarasambhava

The Kumarasambhava is a Sanskrit play by Kalidasa and is widely regarded as his finest play. The period of the play written is uncertain. Kumarasambhava literally means 'the birth of Kumara'. The play is in seventeen cantos and has Shringara rasa as its key theme. The story has a demon Tarakasura who gained a boon that he would be killed by Shiva's son. The demon started his riot against the Devas.

The Devas sought the help of Lord Shiva to put an end to the demon's tyranny. However, Shiva was in deep meditation. Therefore, the Devas requested Lord Kamadeva, the god of love and desire, to help. Kamadeva used his powers of attraction to disturb Shiva's meditation and evoke feelings of love in him. Lord Karthikeya, a son was born to Lord Shiva, who could fulfill the conditions of the boon given to Tarakasura to annihilate him.

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan states that since the creator and originator of the epic is the hero of Kumarasambhava, naturally, there are elements of dance descriptions present. For example, there is a mention of the Sukumar dance of Parvati, along dances of the tree, peacocks etc.

The text also described the magnificent dance of Kalika by the ascetic Bhringi on the marriage of Shiva and Parvati, with a garland of skulls for the couple.

Parvati describes the dance of the Lord to the Brahmachari who converses with her: his ashes wither as he dances and uses the phrase Nrityabhinaya Kriya rather than Tandava, as usual.

- **Harshacharita**

The Harshacharita is the first composition of the famous Sanskrit playwright Banabhatta. He was the court poet of the Indian emperor Harsha. The Harshacharita chronicles the life and reign of the emperor around 7<sup>th</sup> century.

Dr. Vatsyayan states that Harshacharita mentions five types of goshtis meaning gatherings or assemblies like the Sangam in southern ancient India. These are Kavyagosthi, Galpagosthi, Gitagosthi, Nrityagosthi, and Vadyagosthi. The mentioned goshtis gives us an impression of different groups of people meeting together for various purposes during King Harsha reign.

We learn of various types of dancing in these goshtis especially in the Nrityagosthi. There is mention of the Tandava Nritya, expressing the prevalence of the concept of Shiva's dance.

- **Vikramorvashiyam**

Vikramorvashiyam is a five-act Sanskrit play by Kalidasa. The epic revolves around the love story of King Pururavas and the apsara named Urvashi. This is the second of the three magnum plays written by Kalidasa.

Among the various types of dancing, Kuthilika and Mallaghati are two other unique styles of dance. Dr. Vatsyayan explains that the Kuthilika is performed devoid of any raga. It is belonging to Tandava dancing as it is performed with Ardhamattali, a type of Karana.

- Malavikagnimitram

Malavikagnimitram is a five-act play by Kalidasa in the Sanskrit language. This is the first play by Kalidasa which deals with the life episodes of King Agnimitra, of Shunga. The text throughout describes Agnimitra's love for the Vidharbha princess named Malavika.

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan has noted that most dramas of Kalidas deals with dancers, but in this literature of Malavikagnimitram there is a unique reference, which is most valuable for our purpose. In the play, there is an incident of Shiva, for the sake of this art, transforms his left side of the body as feminine and divides himself into two. According to Dr. Vatsyayan, this is a small reference to the two modes - Tandava and Lasya.

It is recorded by Kalidasa in his Malavikagnimitra, wherein he states that the natya has been bifurcated into two by Rudra in his body intermingled with that of Uma. He refers to the fact that the Ardhanarishwara form of Lord Shiva represents these two aspects of natya in the text of malavikanimitra

Though the actual words Tandava and Lasya are not used, the notion of Shiva separating himself into two suggests the concept of the two categories of dance being prevalent

- **Uttararamcharita**

Uttararamcharita is a Sanskrit play having 7 acts written by Bhavabhuti. It is a well-known story of Uttara Kanda of the epic Ramayana, with certain modifications done by the poet. It describes the story of Ram and Sita after Sita's exile to the forest. It is composed of 'Nataka' type of rupaka

Tandava of the eyebrows and 'bhramana' of the peacock's eyes while it dances to the tunes of Sita. This is mentioned in the Natyashastra as being where the eyeballs move in all directions and make a circle. The author seems to suggest a circular movement of the eyes in which the eyeball makes a complete circle. Therefore, in simple words he uses the descriptions of the Tandava of the eyebrows and the dance of the peacock

- **Malatimadhava**

Malatimadhava is a Sanskrit play by Indian playwright Bhavabhuti dated around around 700 CE. His dramas are popular for its vivid characterization and suspense. Malatimadhava belongs to the 'Prakaran' rupaka. Malati, the daughter of a minister of Padmavati, falls in love with Madhava, the son of a minister of Vidarbha. It turns out that the King of Padmavati wants his minister to get his daughter married to another man.

Aspects of Tandava

Malatimadhava has profound descriptions of the dances of Shiva and Kali. In its prologue, the writer invokes Lord Shiva under the aspect of the Tandava, here the dance of destruction.

In Act V, Shiva is seen dancing to the drum of Nandi. An example is Kapalikas (non-Puranic form of Shaivism) bow to the goddess Chamunda and worship her in the aspect of the Tandava dance.

Malati's perfect way of carrying the body and her movements is described as beautiful and flawless.

#### Tandava of the eyes

Madayantika is a character in the play of Malatimadhava. She is the protagonist's sakhi and the sister of Nandana. In Act VIII, Madayantika describes her dream. This episode talks about the various movements of the eyes like that of Tandava. The word Lasya is used as a synonym for the word Nritya very often here; however, the word Tandava is not often used.

#### Tandava by peacocks

The peacocks also perform Tandava, not merely Nritya. It is interesting to note, the words Nritya and Lasya are replaced here by Tandava because of which one cannot conclude from this example that the distinction between Tandava and Lasya was lost according to the author.

# CONCLUSION

As discussed, and mentioned in the above treatises the three texts stand out as hallmarks, in re- defining the characteristics and dealing of dance in the respective period. The Natyashastra of Bharata; Abhinavabharati of Abhinavagupta and Sangita-ratnakara of Sarangadeva :all the texts enumerated deal with the subject of dance in some detail; exclusively or along with music, drama, and poetics.

It is however in the Natyashastra of Bharatha we find specific information about dance in a comprehensive manner for the first time. From the first chapter of Natyashastra, dance was not originally a part of the performance of the play and it was incorporated to natya at the occasion of Lord Shiva

Natyashastra is, of course, the firsthand information text that not only enunciated the principles of Dancing, but also brought them into practice. Though the emphasis of Natyashastra was on the production and presentation of the play, it effectively brought together the elements of music and dance, all of which contributed to the wholesomeness of the theatre.

The Dance that Bharata specifically refers to is Nrta, pure dance, which was primarily performed before the commencement Purvaranga as an oblige to gods, many centuries later we find it under different meaning given by various authors. The elements of the Nrta were also brought into Drama by adding Abhinaya, stating that the new resultant (Nritya) was biased only for women etc. Each of the three terms Nrta, nritya and natya were subjugated enormously by the authors under the basis of gender post Bharata period.

Bharata had used the term Nrta to denote dancing, in general. But, in the medieval period, the meaning of Nrta was narrowed down to mean a mere decorative aid. It was just an aspect of the whole body of Dancing.

Through the centuries scholars have suggested that lasya is for women and tandava is for men which is not acceptable to me and society in general in today's world. As dancers use both the vigorous and the lyrical in dance, what truly matters is the guna or quality in every aspect of dance there is both lasya and tandava. As Sankara says 'if Shiva is united with shakti, he is able to stir.'"

The vigorous or soft concept is purely conventions made by the people. It is not practical that women should be soft and gentle, even when they are in furious situations; and, men should be aggressive when they are in grief or in love. Hence it is wrong to state that Lasya should be performed only by women; and Tandava is exclusively for men.

After subsequent periods, this delightful art form came to be celebrated as Nrtya, in its early stages, Dance was not considered as an independent Art-form.

Abhinavagupta's theory has been profound and influential. Succeeding generations of writers on Natya were guided by his concepts and theories of Rasa, Bhava, aesthetics and dramaturgy

A significant development during this period was greater importance to the regional types of Dances was given equally. Through the lens of Natyashastra, these texts recognized and paved a path for the emergence of dances in different geographic regions and of different cultural groups. In the process, two classifications the concepts of Marga, came to be distinguished from the regional, popular, unconventional types of Dance, termed as Desi.

By about the 13th century, dance came into its own; and, was no longer an ancillary to drama, as was the case during the time of Natyashastra. Yet; the Dance, in this period, continued to be discussed along with the main subjects such as Music and Drama. The Sangita-ratnakara of Sarangadeva marks the beginning of the period when Dance spearheaded to be discussed popularly rather than as an adjunct to Drama

The concept of Nrta continued to exist and Nritya was established; each with its own individual identity. The term Natya which signified the combination of Nrta (pure dance) and Abhinaya (meaningful expressions) had come into wide use.

The emphasis of the later texts shifted away from the Marga of the Natyashastra; but, leaned towards the newer forms of Desi Dances with their improvised techniques and structural principles. Apart from increase in the varieties of regional dance forms, several manuals in regional languages began to appear. These regional texts provide a glimpse of the state of Dance as was practiced in different regions.

In Indian philosophy from which the classical music and performing arts arouse the five aspects of existence

Creation, maintenance, destruction, concealment, and revelation. While the first three is obvious to human beings in the day-to-day mechanism of birth life and death on the physical plane which is a consequence of non-realisation of the innate Spiritual Dimension.

Those who are adept at knowing the higher knowledge, ignorance which arises because of concealment of higher understanding commonly referred to as Maya gets lifted. Ofcourse this happens most often because of a preceptor or Spiritual Guru's kindness and grace. This is referred to as the Alchemy which commonly means to transforming a base metal to gold, which translates into a spiritual aspirant or a sadhaka gaining a knowledge or experience that was only hitherto privy to the Guru alone.

Lifting of this Concealment parallels the Christian process of redemption. Consequent to this revelation the spiritual aspirants' revels in the non-dual state of existence where unity alone is perceived at all times. such a person is referred to as a mahathma ie a great soul



We often bewildering process of overcoming the limitations of the reality could be equated with 'tandava the great dance towards dissolution'. Subsequently the spiritual aspirant experiences love toward whole of creation which is embodied as genuine 'lasya.'

While creator is not limited to the human senses, to see and hear the right knowledge obtained from a competent person helps the sadhaka appreciate the 'creator through his myriad creations.'

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