CONCLUSION

Karnatic music comprises different musical forms like geetam, jatiswaram, swarajati, varnam, kirtanam, padam, javali and tillana. Out of these musical forms, kirtanam, padam, javali and tillana are performed in both music and dance concerts. Tillana is undoubtedly the most familiar and popular among them presumably due to the following reasons.

1) Its rhythmic aspect. Rhythm is present in all living things and in all forms of nature. Naturally, human beings have a tendency to enjoy and appreciate rhythmic utterances and movements.

2) Its adaptability to dance. Tillana is an indispensable concluding item in both music and dance concerts. Unlike other musical forms, it is easily adaptable to dance.

3) Its fast tempo. Human life has become faster than ever, and so, the fast tempo in which the tillana is sung or performed is all the more appealing to the listener / spectator.

The word ‘tillana’ does not appear to have any attributed meaning. It appears that the first part ‘ti’ of tillana is borne of Lord Siva’s tandava dance and the syllable ‘la’ represents the lasya nritta of Goddess Parvati. The last syllable ‘na’ of tillana indicates natana. On the whole, the word tillana represents the "tandava lasya natana of Siva and Parvati".
Like almost all the other musical forms, tillana is derived from the medieval prabandhas. There is sufficient evidence to prove that tillanas are derivatives of Karana and Kaivada prabandhas. The constituents of the eight varieties of Karana prabandha are similar to those of tillanas. Both of them have pātas that is the cholkettus, swaram, pada that is the sahitya and tenaka that is salutations to God or a particular patron. Kaivada prabandha is defined by Matanga and Haripaladeva as one sung in three sections- the first two sections with hasta pātas and the third section with pada. This bears much resemblance to the structure of modern tillana.

Venkitamakhi’s kaivada prabandha has a close resemblance to present-day tillana, despite the fact that it consists of four sections. The first two sections have rhythmic jatis (like tillana) and the fourth section has the text with vaggeyakara mudra and prabandha mudra (to be the sahitya of modern tillana)

The counterpart of tillana in Hindustani music is called ‘Tarana’. According to the legends, Amir Khusro drew inspiration from karana prabandha and composed the musical form ‘tarana’ using the syllables used in Indian vocalization together with Persian words. The words repeatedly used in tarana ‘Tū dāni’ and ‘Nādir dāni’ respectively mean ‘You know’ and ‘You are the complete wisdom’. Unlike tillana, taranas are sung with extensive improvisations which have made it a part of classical concerts though it is sometimes sung immediately after the major khyal.
Before the advent of the 19th century, Uttukkadu Venkata Subbier, Narayana Tirthar and Purandaradasar authored compositions mixed with jatis. These compositions were generally in the form of salutation to Krishna and the jatis were intended to depict the dances of Krishna.

Uttukkad has written some compositions with cholkettus more or less resembling the form of tillana, sometime during the first half of the 18th century. However, Merattur Virabhadrayya is regarded as the first composer of tillana (18th century). His tillana is composed in Pantuvarali raga, Adi tala, with the mudra Achyuta varada.

Two of the compositions of Uttukkad resemble the modern tillana in several aspects. Like the modern tillanas, these compositions can be split into three sections- pallavi, anupallavi and charanam. One of them is better known as “Kalinga nartana tillana”. It is in Gambhira natta and the other is in Surutti.

Kalinga nartana tillana depicts the dance of Lord Krishna over the hood of the serpent king Kaliya with the entire movements of the head and the limbs exhaustively picturised. The hissing sound of the tired serpent is beautifully echoed in the word “mandas”----

The other tillana in Surutti is also in praise of Lord Krishna. The pallavi and anupallavi are composed in tisra nadai and the charanam in chaturasra nadai.

The earliest available tillanas are of Swati Tirunal and Tanjore Quartette. Among the six tillanas of Swati Tirunal, two are in Bhupalam and one each
in Purvi, Kalyani, Anandabhairavi and Dhanasri. The tillana in Dhanasri, which alone has sahitya, conforms to the definition of present-day tillana. The other five have only jatis. It would mean that tillanas without sahitya were composed during the interin period of evolution.

Dr. Balamuralikrishna has sung one of the two tillanas in Bhupalam composed by Swati Tirunal with his own sahitya. Sri.T.K.Govinda Rao in his book “Compositions of Swati Tirunal” has supplied sahitya to all the five tillanas. The tillana in Kalyani has been regarded by him as having been composed in ragamalika.

The tillana now sung in Dhanasri was composed by Swati Tirunal in Mulanchani Dhanyasi. It was given the modern form in Dhanasri by the renowned violnist Lalgudi Jayaraman.

Even the tillanas which do not have sahitya have been studded with prosodical beauties like adiprasam, dvitiyakshara prasam, antya prasam etc in the jatis themselves. These compositions therefore, give abundant proof of the poetical and musical genius of the King Composer.

The Tanjore Quartette who formulated the present-day concert pattern of Bharatanatyam, have composed numerous tillanas. They have employed major ragas like Sankarabharanam and Todi, minor ragas like Bilahari, Kanada, Vasanta, Atana and Hamsanandi and light ragas like Kapi and Bihag. The talas used are Adi, Rupakam and Chappu. Prosodical beauties like mudras of deity, patron and place adorn the sahitya of these
compositions. All the characteristic phrases and delicate nuances of respective ragas are beautifully woven in these tillanas. Since the quartette were proficient nattuvanars, the tillanas composed by them, are extremely viable to be staged in a dance concert with scintillating footwork.

The prominent vaggeyakara Ramnad Srinivasa Iyengar has also composed tillanas which are popular both in dance and music concerts. He has employed ragas like Todi, Yadukula kamboji, Kanada, Paras, Purnachandrika, Sindhubhairavi, Nattakkurinji, Hindolam, Kamavardhini and Kapi. He has used the rare talas Lakshmisa (106th among the 108 talas) and Ragavardhini (one among the 72 talas) for his Kapi and Kamavardhini tillanas respectively. His tillanas are embroidered with poetic beauties like adi prasa, dvitiyakshara prasa, mudra of patron, vaggeyakara mudra, sthala mudra in the sahitya and gopucha yati in the jati syllables. The talas used by him are Rupaka, Adi, Khanda triputa and Desadi.

Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer is noted for many musical compositions -- the 72 melakarta ragamalika, periya purana kirtanas and above all for his two tillanas, especially the Simhanandana tala tillana. Both of his tillanas are composed in rare talas- one in Simhanandanam and the other in Hanumatkumbham. They are in ragas Kanada and Mohana respectively.

Pallavi Seshayyar, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Kunrakkudi Krishnayyar, Veena Seshanna, Muthaiyya Bhagavathar, Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Madhurai.N. Krishnan, Dr.M.Balamuralikrishna, Lalgudi.G.Jayaraman,
Maharajapuram Santanam, Nagamani Srinath and T.K. Govinda Rao are also prominent composers of tillanas.

Apart from the Dravidian languages, tillanas have been composed in Marathi during the reign of Marathi kings, especially King Serfogi. The authors of these pieces were either the rulers themselves or the eminent poets and renowned vaggeyakaras who adorned the royal courts of Raja Shahaji to the last Maratha ruler Sivaji.

Besides tillanas in the usual form, there are some others following a slightly deviated pattern and theme.

Tillana daru composed by Krishnaswamy Ayya in Surutti raga, Adi tala, is one having the components of tillana and daru. It resembles tillana in having jatis at the beginning of the pallavi and at the end of the charanam, but contains a larger volume of sahitya when compared with tillana.

Tirukkural tillana composed by Panchapakesa Iyer in raga Lalitapanchama and tala Adi has the first verse of the Tamil epic Tirukkural as its sahitya.

The Kambaramayana tillana composed by Kunrakkudi Krishnayyar has sahitya in the form of verses reproduced from Kambaramayana.

Dr. Balamuralikrishna has composed two beautiful tillanas based on grīhabhedam and gatibhedam. The fundamental raga used in grīhabhedam tillana is Kalyani. The other ragas are the murchana ragas of Kalyani or
janya ragas derived from the murchana ragas. The other one namely the
gatibheda tillana is composed in five different janaka ragas ending with
priya and in five different gatis- tisra, chaturasra, khanda, misra and
sankirna.

Since tillana is a prominent item in dance concerts, choreography of tillanas
deserves special attention. The traditional Bharatanatyam is well balanced
with Alarippu and Tillanas. Both give importance to nritta aspect and are
rhythm oriented. The nritta aspect introduced in alarippu is fully developed
in the performance of tillanas. The emphasis is on foot work. It is a vigorous
number requiring exquisite execution of intricate movements of steps/korvais
in three speeds and five gatis. It is an attractive item with a number of
alluringly sculpturesque poses and variegated and scintillating movements.
Different types of adavus, namely Nattadavu, Tattumettadavu, Meyadavu,
Mandita adavu, Charika adavu, Kudittumetta adavu, Kuttadavu, Charukkal
adavu, Mandi adavu, Sutradavu, Makuda adavu and Teerumana adavu figure
in the performance of tillanas. Since importance is given to nritta, only one
having a good understanding of nritta aspect, kanakku and gestures for
abhinaya can give choreography to a tillana in a satisfactory manner. A
dancer plans a jati just the same way as a musician a renders the kalpana
swaram. Just as one musician presents the different combinations for one
avartha of adi tala (32 matras), the dancer performs different beautifully
interwoven adavus within one avartha.

Different combination of adavus gives rise to different jatis. A teerumana
adavu is performed at the end of the jati for an effective and appealing
finish. Jatis exclusively involving teerumana adavus are also performed to ensure a hilarious end to a dance concert.

Tillana is effectively applied in multifarious fields. It acts as an entertainer to create a sense of enthusiasm and joy in both music and dance concerts. In this field of learning, tillana helps the vocalist give a certain amount of voice control, requisite stamina, speed control in gamaka and grip on tala. Tillana helps the dancer perform the adavus in fast tempo in a perfect manner. It also assists the instrumentalists in swift bowing or fast plucking. It also serves as a research material. It has an important role in history as the sahitya gives the names of the kings or chieftains of the place during that particular period. One also gets an idea about the various shrines and deities presiding over those shrines.

Rare talas like Simhanandanam, Lakshmis and Ragavardhini owe their continued existence to the tillanas composed in them.

The early composers of tillanas mostly adopted Ghana ragas; but subsequently there was a noticeable trend towards usage of desiya ragas. These composers have employed major ragas like Sankarabharanam and Todi, desiya ragas like Kappi and Bihag and janya ragas like Hindolam, Mohanam, Bilahari, Kanada, Atana, Hamsadhvani and Yadukula kamboji. Tillanas have also been composed, though sparingly, in rare ragas like Paras and Purnachandrika. Some of the tillanas of Ramnad Srinivasa Iyengar and Tanjore Quartette are adorned by a lot of sangatis and they vie with kritis in their musical excellence.
Recently, most of the composers adopt only light ragas. The number of sangatis in their compositions is comparatively less. As tillana is sung as the last item of a music concert, more attention is given to kanakku or tala combinations, the total scintillating effect of which leaves the audience spell bound and lingers in them even after they go out of the concert hall. Unlike the early composers, some of the modern composers give the ragamudra in the tillanas authored by them as is usually done in kritis.

Apart from the common talas of Adi, Rupakam and Misra chappu, the early composers of tillanas have adopted in composition of tillanas, rare talas like Lakshmis, Ragavardhini, Simhanandanam, Hanumatkumbham, Desadi and Triputa. Modern composers have, however, preferred Adi tala for composition of tillanas, although they have, at times, resorted to Rupaka and Misra chappu. Dr. Balamuralikrishna has composed a gati bheda tillana in ragamalika pattern. The five nadais- Tisra, Chaturasra, Khanda, Misra and Sankirna are employed in this tillana- one each in each of the five sections.

Earlier tillanas were composed in praise of or in the form of an entreaty or prayer to a particular God, King or other patron. The lyrics from Thirukkural and Kambaramayanam have also been adopted for sahitya of tillanas. The sahitya of most of them has sthalamudra and/or the mudra of God or other patron as the case may be. Some of them have prabandha mudra ie the name of the musical form ‘tillana’ and vaggeyakara mudra
Due to the disappearance of kings and other patrons from the scene of sponsorship of Karnatic music, the present day tillanas are composed as salutation to Gods only. They are characterized by beautiful innovations revealing intellectual craftsmanship. The principles of ‘gatibhedam’ and ‘jatibhedam’ are beautifully illustrated in the tillanas composed by Dr. Balamuralikrishna. They are composed in ragamalika pattern. In almost all the tillanas of today, the mudra of the musical form is interspersed and some of them have vaggeyakara mudra and sthala mudra.

Tillanas have a prominent role in music as well as dance concerts. Music of India is very ancient, voluminous and wealthy. It has proud heritage, having been given shape and form and order and arrangement by the sages, gurus and acharyas of the past. If music can be considered as a vast and deep ocean, tillanas are priceless pieces among the precious and invaluable gems, pearls and corals glittering beneath its unfathomable depths.