CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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

(1) *Rgveda*, Vol.1, Mandala-1, Sūkta-92, rīca-4;

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

With the passage of time, the twin arts of music and dance have bequeathed a glorious heritage with a pre-conceived aim of devotion to God for spiritual realisation. Convincingly, most of the illustrious authors of the standard treatises on the subjects of dance and music were themselves seers such as Bharata, Nandikesvara, Narada and so on. It is a notable fact that the exquisite creative productions of many an artiste were a resultant feature of their upsurging devotion to God. Dance as a pure offering of art at the feet of the Divinity was considered the best path to attain the Almighty. As the object of religion is also to enable man to attain the supreme, this intimate relationship between religion and dance has necessitated their coexistence. Needless to mention that from time immemorial, they have been functioning with the same specific purpose. In view of this synergistic relationship, dance for centuries with its religious fervour has been nurtured within the sacred precincts of the temple. Temple became the heavenly abode of fine arts and dance & music became definite forms of worship giving dance its distinctive religious quality which to this day has remained a satisfying concept to all. This sublime approach of the art - 'dancing for divinity' was harnessed in South India by the onset of the 'Bhakti Movement' around 6-8 century A.D. The doctrine of absolute devotion to God inaugurated the new era of spiritual learning in South India with the appearance of the Śaivaite and Vaisnavaite saint bards known as the Nayanmars and the Alvars who provided a fresh impetus to the twin arts of music & dance and made an impeccable influence in the minds
of the devout public by their soul-stirring devotional compositions known as Tevarams and Divyaprabandhas. Among the 63 Nayanmars, Appar, Tirujnana Sambandar and Sundarar became highly popular for their 'Tevaram' compositions and Manikkavaccagar for his Tiruvāccakam. They were claimed to be the Saivaitic Quartette.

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

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

(1) A Board of Scholars - Translation into English - Introduction - "The Narva Śāstra of Bharatamuni", Sai Satguru Publications - Delhi - P. 19
(2) Ibid - Chapter-14, P.200
of the temple. These girls termed as 'Devadasis' or handmaidens to God were attached to these places of worship. These devadasis were the sole custodians of the art of dancing until the beginning of the 20th century. Though the art practised by them was known by different names right from the period of Sangam age, Chola, Nayak and upto the Maratha period of the 19th century, it (art) finally got rechristened as ‘Bharatanatyam’ in the 20th century. Hence the present Bharatanatyam in its pure and pristine form which has reached such a pinnacle of excellence over the periods, owes its existence to South India in general and Thanjavur district in particular.

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

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

_Tolkāṇṇiyam (300 B.C):-_ Among the oldest literary works in Tamil, providing abundant information regarding the triple arts of dance, music and drama of the ancient Tamils is the Tolkappiyam authored by Tolkappiyar, the great grammarian of the 3rd century B.C. Though the treatise is mainly a work on grammar, it incorporates the dance elements
and also accounts a holistic view of the socio-political, geographical, religious atmosphere and the cultural traditions of the Tamil people. From Tolkappiyam, we learn that all the sections of the people were privileged to take to the art of dancing and those sections of the people who took to the art as their profession, formed an honoured class in the Tamil society. These artists were called by different names in accordance with their proficiency in the different component aspects of the art, be it music, dance or drama. As the art of dancing was referred to as 'Viral' or 'Kūttu', the male professional dancers were termed as 'Kuttars' and the vocalists and the instrumentalists who provided the orchestral support to the dances were called as 'Īsāi Panargal'. The artists practising the martial art (which was mainly intended to be performed during war time) with its motivating music were referred to as 'Porunar'. Regarding 'Kūttar' and 'Viraliyar' there were no caste restrictions but such a privilege did not apply to 'Panar' or 'Porunar'. Women dancers who were adept in the art of histrionics were known as Viraliyars or Kūttiyars. It is further learnt that these Viraliyars were not only adept in pure and representational dance, 'Nṛtta' and 'Nṛtya' but also exhibited capacious knowledge in the field of expressive dance-'Abhinaya', by strictly following the shastric principles enunciated in the then existing Laksana granthas, to the extent of creating aesthetic pleasure.

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

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

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

The three dance forms are:-

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

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

\(^{(1)}\) Cf. Dr. Jnana Kulendran - *Pazhan Tamilar Adalil Isai* - Tamil University, Thanjavur - 1990 - Ch.1 - P.1
Some of the treatises which have become obsolete are as follows:

1. Nadaha Tamil Nūl or Gunanūl. This treatise (Nul) on dramaturgy was very much in vogue during Adiyarkkunallar's time.

2. Bharatam is understood to be another Tamil classic treatise on dramaturgy (Science of drama).

Some of the treatises that are published are as follows:

1. Pañcamarabu - another work on dramaturgy was written by Arivanar. It was published in the year 1973. The text has got five component aspects of dance such as -
   a) Isai marabu (music)
   b) Vacciya marabu (speech)
   c) Nrṛta marabu (pure dance)
   d) Tala marabu (time measure)
   e) Abhinaya marabu (mime)

2. Bharata Senāpatiyam by Adi Vayilar was published in 1958 and

3. Kūttanul by Śātanār (published in 1968) is another such work on the art of dance.

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

Apart from the treatises on dance, focus was also directed towards the aspect of rhythm which has been a vital component governing the art of music and dance. There is evidence to many works having existed...
purely dealing with the aspect of rhythm, but most of these treatises have remained mere names today. ‘Tālavahaiyōttu’\(^1\) which was in vogue during AdiyarkunallaVs period is one among such extinct works.

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

\(^1\) Cf. Dr. Jñāna Kulendran - Pazhan Tamilar Adalil I șai P. 17.
\(^2\) Šilappadikāram - 3, 40. Cf. Dr. Jñāna Kulendran - P.3.
executed which ultimately facilitate in heightening the aesthetic pleasure
of the dance have been mentioned in elaborate measure.

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

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

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

\(^{(1)}\) *Silappadikāram* - 3.12-25  Cf Dr Jnana Kulēndran - Op cit. P4
Yazh and other percussive instruments. This orchestra was termed as ‘āmanaṇḍrikai’\(^{(1)}\). After these initial proceedings, the danseuse is said to have made her entrance from the right side of the stage placing her right foot first. This tradition is still followed even to this day in the dance recitals. From the description of the eleven types of dances, we infer that unlike the present day tradition of the dance depicting different characters by a dancer adorning a specific costume(Ekaharya), danseuse Madhavi is said to have adorned different costumes suggestive of the character portrayed by her in all the eleven dances.

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

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

\(^{(1)}\) *Śilappadikāram* - 3, 138-142.

\(^{(1)}\) South Indian *Inscriptions* (SII), Vol. II, No. 66
No 2  Lord Nataraja in the Vimana on the Southern side of the Big Temple

No. 3  Raja Raja The Great (985-1014 A.D.)
also allocated separate colonies around the temple to the musicians and dancers attached to this temple, thereby ensuring the artists with permanent settlement. This seems to be one of the glowing examples of the King’s generous patronage to the arts. The names and addresses of these dancers and musicians can be learnt from the wall inscriptions of the Big temple. The appointment of 12 nattuvanārs known as ‘ādal-āsān’ for the purpose of imparting sound training to these dancers can be inferred from these inscriptions. It further throws light on the appointment of 5 vocalists called ‘gana pādīgal’. The male and female vocalists were known as ‘Gandharvas’ and ‘Gandharvis’ respectively. The other musicians appointed were -

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

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

(1) S.I.I. Vol.II. No.66. Line 401
(2) Ibid. Lines 413-414.
(3) Ibid. Line 441
(4) Ibid. Line 468
(5) Ibid Lines 422-440
(6) S.I.I. No.154 of 1895
(7) S.I.I. No.90 of 1932
as Aryam paduvor and for Tamil kuttu as Tamil paduvor. The appointment of vocalists for these dances was dependent upon their mastery over the languages Sanskrit and Tamil respectively. The fact that the dancers and musicians were insisted upon to have a thorough knowledge and deep understanding of the language in order to efficiently convey the import of the songs through their soulful music, is quite evident from these invaluable evidences from the inscriptions.

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

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

\(^{1}\) Saskia C. Kersoenboom - ‘Niva Samañīcali’. The field research financed by the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) P. 143.


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

\(^{4}\) Ibid, Line, 441

\(^{5}\) Ibid, Line, 441
Kings took the title "Nṛtta Vinōda" signifying as "one delighting in
dance". (1)

The platforms for staging dramas, dance performances and such allied
arts during the Chola period were known as Nṛtta mandapam (2), Nātaka
Śālaṇa (3) Nanavidha Nataka śālaṇa (4) and Natya mandapam (5).

In addition to these honours, the artists of the Chola period were paid
emoluments (6) too.

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

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

(1) Cf. Dr. V. Raghavan - Bharata Natya’; The Journal of the Music Academy, Madras: Vol.XLV, P.238
(2) S.I.I. No.340ofI914
(3) S.I.I. Vol. II No.124
(4) Annual Report on Epigraphy (ARE)-1925, Pp. 11-13
(5) S.I.I. Vol. 2, No. 178
(6) S.I.I. Vol. II, Part I-III
Lands given to dancers, dance masters and music teachers on account of their individual merit were referred to as ‘kani’\(^{(1)}\) (fruit - reward). ‘Patiyilar kani’ was given to female temple-dancers, ‘Nattuvakkani’ to dance masters and ‘panakkani’ to music teachers respectively.

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

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

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

\(^{(2)}\) Ibid., P.58.
of fine Telugu literature in Tanjore which was till then a Tamil province. This undoubtedly is a matter of approbation. Tanjore indeed became the abode of many a talented artiste and scholar in the sphere of music, dance and Telugu literature.

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

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

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

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

\[
\text{Jayantasesadimarāga ramanandaditalan racayanvis'esan} \\
\text{Saṅgita vidya samupādisāstvam} \\
\text{Vipaṅcikavādaavicākaṇānām} \quad (3)
\]

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


\(^{(2)}\) Ibid

\(^{(3)}\) Ibid
'Saṅgita Sudha'. This bears ample testimony to his erudite scholarship in Laksna and Lakṣya of music and dance. In this direction, a śloka\(^{(1)}\) from Saṅgita Sudha is cited below.

Sri pariṣṭaharana prabandham citramca
valmikicaritrakavyam
tatha Acyutendrabhyudayam gajendramōksam caritram
....................nalasya citram||
Sri rukminikrsna vivāha yaksagana
prabandhanadinaikamedan nirmāya
vāgbhirnipuṇārthabhāgbhirvidvātkavināṁ
vidadhāsidsam ||

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

\(^{(1)}\) Saṅgīta Sudhā, Op. cit., P.5; Sī. 62-63
\(^{(2)}\) Cf. Dr. S. Seetha- 'Taniore As a Seal of Music'. University of Madras, 1981, P. 36.
such as *perani*, danda *lasya*, *kundali* and so on. The work also deals with the technical aspects concerning the dance such as *Hastabhinaya*, *Sarirabhinaya*, *Padabhedas*, all of which have been given an adequate treatment in the earlier scientific treatises on dance. Some of the talas mentioned in the work are *Hamsalila*, *Kankala*, *Vilokitam*, *Mattiga* and so on. The names of these talas are not found in the practising tradition of the present day music and dance. In addition to this, the work gives a detailed account of the different musical instruments, such as *mukhavinā*, *Kinnari*, *Tambura* handled by the women musicians of the orchestral troupe. The depth with which the royal composer dealt with even the minutest details and technicalities of dance reveals his proficiency and profound scholarship in the subject of dance. In all respects, such intricate details regarding dance makes one feel the work more to be a treatise on dance. Many distinguished scholars, learned poets, musicians and dancers who adorned his court had invariably eulogised their patron's extraordinary talents and artistic accomplishments in most of their celebrated works. They had further hailed him as ‘Abhinava *Bhoja*’\(^1\) and ‘Bharata *Vidyadhurandhara*’\(^2\).

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

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

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

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\(^1\) *Cemakura Venkatakavi* - *Vijaya Vilasa* - Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library (GOML), Madras. P.23-Verse 53

\(^2\) Ibid. P.10-Verse 21
and acclaimed poetess Madhuravani and conferred titles on them. It was during King Raghunatha's reign that 'Ksetrayya', the peerless composer of padas visited the Tanjore court. A Kaṇḍapadyam by Ksetrayya best illustrates the celebrated poet's intention of visiting the court of such an outstanding royal artiste like King Raghunatha.

**Tamu dame vatturarthulu**

**Krama meriginadata kadaku rammanara**

Kamalambul unnacotiki

**Bhramarambulan Acyutendra Raghunathanrpa.**

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Nāṭya(2)</th>
<th>Name of the dancer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caupada</td>
<td>Rūpavati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabda Cintāmani</td>
<td>Champakavalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakkani</td>
<td>Mūrti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koravu</td>
<td>Komalavalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navapadam</td>
<td>Lokanayaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deśi</td>
<td>Sasirekha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darupadam</td>
<td>Ratnagiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perani</td>
<td>Bhagirati</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Ibid - P.9, Verse - 23.
In addition to these dancers, famed dancer Muddu Candrarekha(1), who was initially in the court of Vira Venkataraya (1504-1616 A.D.) was profusely honoured with several titles and biruda vādyas by King Vijayaraghava. She had the unique privilege of performing the first dance in the court. Pada as a dance composition became highly popular during Vijayaraghava's period. The dancers in the court were said to have performed many Madana & Dutya padas, Navaratna mālika and other 'Lakṣyā nātyās’(2).

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

"Cakkaga veyi padamulu palakariṇcuṅkoṛāne bahumana mippincē."

2) Ibid - P.9- Verse 23
3) Ibid - P.12-Verse 30

* The residential quarters for the brahmins are referred to as Agraharas.
Another pada - Sāmānyamukāde - vāni pondu in raga Kambhōji, Capu tala, describes the unique characteristics and the literary and artistic accomplishments of the King. The Carana of the pada thus speaks -

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

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

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

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

1. Dontara videmuto na Ceňta rakura 'Don't come near me, with a pile of folded betal leaves and nuts' in Raga Punnāgavarāli.

2. Sudina mayane i proddu. - 'today is auspicious day' , in Kambhoji raga.

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

(2) Ebid., Pp.62-63
Some of his creditable works are -
   a) Prahlada Caritramu
   b) Pūtanaharanamu
   c) Raghunāthābhyudayamamu
   d) Raghunatha nāyakābhhyudamamu (Dvipda kāvyam)\(^{(1)}\)
   e) Vipranarayana Caritra.

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

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

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

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

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

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


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

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

** Durusaina means one that is brisk and vigorous.

(3) Dr. Arudra, Did.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bhosala Family

Ekoji-I alias Venkoji
(1676-1683)

Šāhaji-II
(1684-1712)

Sarabhoji alias Serfoji-I
(1712-1728)

Kāṭṭu Rāja
the pretended son of Serfoji-I
(1738)

Ekoji-II alias Bāva Saheb
(1736-1737)

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

Tulaja-I alias Tukkoji
(1728-1736)

Ekoji-II alias Bāva Saheb
(1736-1737)

Pratāpa Simha
(1739-1763)

Tulaja-II
(1763-1787)

Amara Simha
(1787-1798)

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

Sivāji-II
(1832-1855)
of time, proved to be an able administrator who strived for the prosperity of his subjects and being a learned person, took immense interest in the promotion of art and literature.

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

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

Sṛigaṛaṃaṇija Sāhaįjivaŋ(4), a drama dealing with the life of Sahaji, written by Periyappakavi, a court poet who won many accolades for his

(1) Dr. V. Raghavan - Ed., Sāhendravilāsa of Sridhara Vehkatesa Ayyāvāl, TSM Series, No.54.

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MARATHA KINGS OF TANJORE

No.4  Sāhaji-II (1684-1712 A.D.)

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

No.6  Tulaja-I (1728-1736 A.D.)

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

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

No.9  Serfoji-II (1798-1832 A.D.)
      and  Śivāji-II (1832-1855 A.D.)
meritorious works, was held in high esteem by the King. We come to know that this dance drama was regularly enacted in the Tiruvarur and Tiruvaiyar temples during its annual festivals. There were several other luminaries attached to his court who were highly proficient in Sanskrit, Marathi and Telugu. Trayambakarāyamakhi his able minister had written ‘Dharmakutam’ a rare commentary on Ramayana as a Dharma Sāstra\(^{(1)}\). This work gives a clear insight into the various activities of Sahaji as well as his literary accomplishments.

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

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

\(^{(1)}\) K R Subramanian, The Maratha Rajas of Tanjore - 1928 - P 18

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

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

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

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

\(^{(2)}\) Marathi Amanath Bundle D.852 and Descriptive catalogue (Dcs.Cat)of Telugu Manuscripts - 853-T.M.S.S.M. Library
proper moorings in the art of expressive dance. Several astapadis written by unknown authors of his period have been ascribed to Sahaji. These astapadis have been written based on the structure of Jayadeva's Gita Govinda. Further, the royal author had written several compositions and natakas eulogising other deities of the Hindu pantheon. Radhā Bhusmisdhar Vilasa nataka, Sri Krsna vilāsa nātakamu and Sita’ Kalyanamu are few examples to cite. He was the first royal composer of several musical plays in Marathi at Tanjore. Though these musical plays resemble yaksaganas in its aspects of composition, several such works of the court poets including that of royalty had become extremely popular owing to its literary merit during Maratha rule. All these works have been preserved in the archives of T.M.S.S.M.* Library. Many of his contemporary poets and learned pandits of his court had extolled Sāhaji in their padas and other works, for his intellectual attainments as an ingenious composer, musicologist and not the least munificent patron. Girirāja Kavi had written many Srīnāra padas in praise of his patrons Sāhaji and Sarabhoji-I. Sahaji had been hailed by the votaries of art as ‘Abhinavabhōja or Bhoja of the 18th century Tanjore as he was a good judge of scholarship and was conferred many such titles which include “Sarvajna Cudāmani” praising him as the heart and soul of the muse of learning. It was during Sāhaji’s reign that many Marathi Saint poets from North inaugurated the bhajana and Kirtana paddhati and the art of ‘Harikathā Kālakṣēpa’ in the South and established several

(1) D 10959. Des Cat of Sanskrit MSS. T.M.S.S.M. Library
* Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji’s Sarasvati Mahāl Library(TMSSML)
(2) Marathi Amanath Bundle Vahi No.605, D.854.
(3) K R Subramanian - ‘The Muratha Rais of Tanjore’ - P.33
mutts at Tanjore. Hence, it would not be exaggerating to say that Thanjavur became a culturally multilingual area during the distinguished rule of the Marathas.

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

Sarabhoji-I (A.D.1712-1728):- Like his illustrious brother Sāhaji-II, Sarabhoji-I also extended tangible amount of patronage to art and literature. Contemporary records represent him as pious and benignant person. He is said to have endowed Brahmins with agraharams such as Mangamatam\(^{(1)}\) in Tiruvenkādu and another at Tirukkkadaiyūr, which was rightly named after him as 'Sarabhoji rājapuram'\(^{(2)}\). Many great scholars and ministers such as Girirajakavi and the able minister Anandarayamakhi who had adorned his brother Sāhaji-II’s court continued under the same status in his reign too. Girirajakavi, the celebrated poet is said to have penned the famous yaksagana ‘Lilāvati Kalvanamu\(^{(3)}\) which pertains to the marriage of Lilāvati with Sarabhoji-I. Girirajakavi was the inventor of new ragas such as Sarabharaja candrika, Sarabha lalita, Sarabha Kalpam and so on, which were named after his patron King Sarabhoji-I.

From the Sanskrit manuscript ‘Sarabhoji Caritra\(^{(4)}\), a panegyric on Sarabhoji-I, we infer that the King had good warship qualities as he saved the Kāvēri dam from its destruction at the hands of Madura King. Like his learned brother, Sarabhoji-I was also a distinguished scholar and was

\(^{(1)}\) K.R. Subramanian-‘The Maratha Rais of Tanjore’-P.39
\(^{(2)}\) Ibid
\(^{(3)}\) B.No. 587 - Descat of Telugu manuscripts
hailed as *Vidyābhōja*(1). Several padas in honour of *Sarabhoji-I* by his court poets have been set to *Hindustani rāgas*(2) such as Jogiasaveri, Brindavani and Bilaval, which reveal the prevalence of *Hindustani* music, with the regnant *South Indian* music. “*Vidvā Parinaya Nāṭaka*(3)”, an allegorical play written by an eminent court poet Vedakavi, had been ascribed to Anandarayamakhi, Minister and Counsellor to *Sarabhoji*. This play deals with the marriage of individual soul with vidya or the eternal wisdom. It is learnt that the play was regularly enacted during the festival of the Goddess of Anandavalli at *Tanjore*.

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

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

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(1) Dr S.Seetha- *Tanjore as a seal of music* ;University of Madras-1981, - P.86
(2) Marathi *Amanathvahi* 605 C. *Marathi* D 2608,- Descat of *Telugu* MSS -D 854,855,756; T.S.S.M. Library
(3) Descatlogue of Sk.Mss Vol-I,No. 12682-T.S.S.M.Library
(4) S.Subrahmanya Sastri-Ed. *The Saṅgīta Sārāmṛta of King* Tulaja of *Tanjore* -The Music Academy Publication, Madras -1942
Apart from the description of the subjects such as Natyamandapa Laksanam, Sabhānayaka Laksanam, Pātraguna and so on, the remarkable and highly productive contribution of the treatise is that it has a valuable section apportioned to the practice of the dance called ‘Srama Vidhi’. It gives the Tamil and Telugu equivalents to the Sanskrit names of the different categories of dance units or adavus. Such a codification of the dance units of Sadir dance well matching with the oral dance tradition for the first time in a scientific treatise seems to be a significant contribution of Tulaja-I to Sadir dance. "This makes the text unique since here one finds a systematic textual correlation of the Nautch** which shows the fact that this tradition again does not stand aloof and that its vernacular terminology does not alienise it or make it a textless-novelty”(1) In the Svara chapter of this treatise, the author gives the description of a vinā under the heading Tulajendra Vina Praśamsa(2) and names the instrument as Tulajendra Vinā(3).

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\begin{align*}
\text{Yasyam} & \text{ melakriyayasavisesoapi} \text{ nahasyate} \\
\text{seyam} & \text{ Tulajarājendraviṇeti} \text{ parikirtita} \\
\text{Srutivinadayo} & \text{ yatra} \text{ linah syuh} \text{ tatphalāptitah} \\
\text{seyam} & \text{———} \\
\end{align*}
\]

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

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

(1) Dr. V Rāghavan-Introduction ‘The Sāṅgīta Saramrta of King Tulaia of Taniore’-The Music Academy, Madras-1942; P.23
(2) Sāṅgīta Saramrta - Svara Chapter - P. 19
(3) Ibid - P.19 - Verse-1.
Needless to mention that Tulaja-I was not only a musicologist of outstanding merit, but was also an ingenious composer of fine yaksaganas. The capaciousness with which he composed the yaksaganas ‘Sivakāmasundari Parinaya nātaka’\(^{(1)}\) and ‘Rāja rañjana Vidya Vilasa Nātaka’\(^{(2)}\) proves his expertise and adroitness in the field of dance too. It was the usual practice of the then poets and composers to deal with mythological themes in their compositions and more so for dance-dramas. Presumably King Tulaja too has followed the same lines for his yakṣagana in Telugu ‘Sivakāma Sundari Parinaya nātaka’ which celebrates the wedding of Lord Siva with Parvati. Here the King must have selected this lofty theme, intending to glorify the divine deeds of Lord Siva.

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

Another special feature of the place is that the idol of Adivarahasvamy was installed by Tulaja. It is further inferred from Sivakama Sundari Parinaya Nataka that it was first enacted in Adivarahasvamy temple. This is evident from this verse\(^{(3)}\) -

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Bhosala Tulajendra purnacandrundu} \\
\text{bhāvimpa paramesa bhaktuduttamudu} \\
\text{devunipera susthira mahadeva} \\
\text{pattanam-bamita sampadala nirmincidittayai-yandu} \\
\text{pratistha gavinci; yādivarāhuni——}
\end{align*}
\]

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

\(^{(1)}\) Or. S. Seetha-Ed., Sivakama Sundari Parinaya Nātaka - T.S.M. Scncs No.138-1971
\(^{(2)}\) Marathi Amanath Bundle-D No.336- T.M.S.S.M. Library.
\(^{(3)}\) Sivakāmasundari Parinaya riataka , P.22
Sāhaji-II as Navina bhōja and refers him as the incarnation of Lord Tyāgēša of Tiruvarur, the family deity of the Maratha rulers.

Vidyasu, hrdayasu, manōjñā gadya-padyeṣu sarvesu Navinabhojām adyam satam Nitimātām Nrpanām - Tyāgēśa rupam Sahabhupa rniide.'"

In Saṅgīta Saramrta, too we find the reference to Tulaja eulogising his brother as 'Sangīta Tantra Priya"(2) or the lover of the art and science of music.

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

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

(1) Sivakama Sundari Parinava nataka - P.4 - SL.7
(2) Saṅgīta Sārāṁra, Ch.1 - P.2. Verse-13

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

Dhanyoham Sadasivam Dhanyoham
Mahadeva Tulajendra pujita

Undoubtedly, Tulaja-I like his brother Sāhaji-II, occupies a distinctive place among the galaxy of outstanding royal musicologists. Another noteworthy feature of Tulaja is that he had sound knowledge in other faculties of learning too and was an authority in different fields such as Jyotisa, Ayurveda, Dharmaśastra and Politics. Several versatile works on these subjects only speak of the scholar King's multifaceted personality.

Some of his works are as follows:
1. Dhanvantari vilasa - A work on medicine MS No-110669.
2. Dhanvantari Saranidhi-A work on medicine MS No. 110692-72
3. Inakula rajatejonidhi - A work on Jyotisha - MS No. 113236
4. Dharma Sārasanāgraaha - Treatise on dharma sastra MS No. 18759-2

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

(2) D.4689, Des Cat of Sanskrit MS - T.M.S.S.M. Library.
Manabhatta was reputed for his collection of numerous works of literature and maintaining a good library during Tulaja's reign.

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

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

Anucu Ekojibhupālundu anudinamu mecci mutyālakucchu
nikicchu sabhanu\(^{(2)}\)

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

\(^{(1)}\) Cf. Dr. S. Seetha, *Tamoic as a Seal of Music*, University of Madras, 1981 - P. 96

\(^{(2)}\) Ibid
such work which he is said to have dedicated to his personal God Lord Candramoulisvara. ‘Vignesvara Kalyanam’ centres round the theme of divine marriage of Siddhi & Buddhi with Lord Ganapati. Ekoji was a fine composer of lovely padas. There are in total 86 padas on different themes such as Srṅgāra, Niti and Bhakti, written in Telugu, Marathi and Sanskrit with the authorship of Ekoji. These padas have been listed in the Telugu MS D. No. 850 & 851 under the heading ‘Ekoji Sāhityamu’.

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

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

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

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

Rajasri Bhosalakulacandra, Ratipati Sundara rājanarendra,
Raja Tulaja Maharaja tanuja Pratapasimha Sutrāma Sallām
Some of his other court poets were -

1. Jagannath Balakrsna, the author of Gyañesvari Tippan
2. Trayambaka bhatt - author of Kalidharma prasamsa
3. Mahadevasuta - author of Kalividambana

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

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

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

(1) Sri A Krishnaswamy Mahāstālick Rao Salheb - Compiler & Editor - Loka Geet - T.S.M Series No. 17 - 1950 - P6
Tulaja-II, received scholastic education from his learned father and was considered as a great linguist of his time. His sound scholarship in Sanskrit language can be best evidenced from the words of Rev. Schwartz, a Danish missionary, and a close friend of Tulaja-II. To quote "Raja successfully cultivated Sanskrit literature so as to have even produced some poetic compositions in that language which are still recited at Tanjore as proof of his genius and learning."(1)

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

Sonti Vehkataramanayya, the esteemed guru of Sri Tyagaraja and Vina Kalahastayya were expert musicians of Tulaja’s time. It is learnt that Sonti Veṅkaṭarāmānayya was given the Ardha Simhāsana (4) by King Tulaja on every New Year's Day, a rare honour in appreciation of his musical talents. Paccimiriyaṃ Adiyappaiaḥ, composer of the famous Tāṇa

(3) Ibid
varna in Ata tāla, ‘Viriboni’ in Bhairavi raga, ornamented his court. He was an expert vainika too. Among his notable disciples were Syāmā Sastri, Pallavi Gopālayya.

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

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

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

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

(1) SarasvatiMahāl Modi Tamil (S.M.M.T.) translation - MS 20 - P.4
(2) S.M.M.T. - MS 2 - P.4 (1777)
the son of Sahaji, a descendant of Bhonsle dynasty, whose family was in the protection of Tulaja and his father Pratāpāsimha.

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

But Tulaja-II had his own apprehensions regarding Amarasimha’s loyalty and hence requested his dear friend Bishop Schwartz to look after the safety and well being of his adopted son Serfoji-II. Hence Serfoji-II, as desired by Tulaja was entrusted in the protecting care of Rev Schwartz. Amarasimha who ruled from 1787-1798, was equally a good patron of art and literature. Several musicians and poets of repute were said to have adorned his court. But as anticipated by Tulaja, Amarasimha had makfside intentions and was no longer wanting to remain as mere defacto ruler. He was keen on bringing about the liquidation of Serfoji-II. In order to usurp the throne, he even entered into treaty twice with the East India Company. As a result on 6-8-1788 with the help of the then Governor Archibald Campbell he ascended the throne. It is learnt from the contemporary records that Amarasimha, in the capacity of a King resorted to every possible method to eliminate Serfoji. This resulted in the ill-treatment of not only the young Serfoji but also the widows of late Raja and other royal ladies who refused to accept Amarasimha as the legitimate heir to the throne. As repugnance and animosity towards Serfoji became unbearable, Rev.Schwartz anticipating threat to the lives of Serfoji and his mothers, requested the then Governor to transfer them to Madras for safety. Meanwhile, this Danish missionary strived no less a measure to restore Serfoji to power by convincing the English of the
rightful claim of his ward to the throne. Corroborating to this, the East India Company took serious umbrage at Amarasimha who dishonoured the implementation of the two treaties he entered with the British and as a result a proclamation was issued deposing Amara Simha and placing Serfoji on the throne of Thanjavur on 30th June, 1798.

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

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

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:-

With an overview of the cultural history of Tanjore given above, the present study 'Development of Sadir in the court of Raja Serfoji-II (1798-1832) of Tanjore', proposes an attempt to bringforth a comprehensive, penetrating analysis of the developmental trends which the art form witnessed, unfolding certain important aspects such as technique, themes-modes and presentational aspects of Sadir, its repertoire and such other allied aspects. This would indeed facilitate in creating an awareness regarding the status enjoyed by Sadir as well as other arts such as Kuravaññī, Bhagavatamelanatakas and thesaurus of various dances prevalent
and encouraged in the court and not the least the royal contribution to the cause of Sadir in the right perspective. The contribution of King Serfoji-II to the development of Sadir is inestimable. His erudite scholarship in the science of music and dance is evident from his Nirupanas-Natyaprabandha which include in itself several dance numbers of Sadir-attam repertoire that were popularly performed by the accomplished danseuses of his court. Written in Marathi, Nirupanas reveal a high degree of co-ordination and perfect synthesis of Marathi language and Karnatic music and therefore can be considered as the mile-stone in the growth and development of the theory and practice of Sadir.

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

Hence, the period of Serfoji-II of Tanjore may be described as the golden age in the development of Sadir and marked as the most innovative and distinguished in the annals of Bharatanatyam. In order to have an adequate understanding, in widening the depth and profundity of the knowledge, better awareness and appreciation of the nuances of the art of Bharatanatyam, there is an imperative need to probe into the study of its historical developments.
This has inspired and motivated the research scholar, with a felt need to study the development of Sadir in the court of King Serfoji-II, as this art had and is still receiving many accolades from one and all.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:-

1. To make an indepth study of the materials that have bearing on the history and development of Sadir in the court of King Serfoji-II (1798-1832).

2. To have a critical appraisal of the then dance-Sadir, with reference to the technical aspects of dance (Nṛtta, Nṛtya and Abhinaya).

3. To identify the dance production of the royal and court composers with special reference to the following items :-
   (a) Performances of music, dance and dance-dramas in the palace and the artists who participated in the recitals.
   (b) Description of the auditorium - Saṅgitamahāl, Sadirmādi and Maratha Durbar hall; the instruments used for the dance recitals, emoluments paid to the artists; the type of costume adorned by the dancers and other details regarding the rules and norms to be followed by the court dancers as well as the nattuvanars or dance teachers.

4. The study presumably will try to throw light on the dance - musical forms that have become obsolete today. A few dance compositions of King Serfoji and his court composers have been choreographed as this will prove to be a valuable addition to the present Bharatanatyam repertoire.
SCOPE OF THE STUDY:-

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