1.00.00 Introduction

Indian culture is blended with several rich heritages; the art of dance is amongst these diverse traditions. In this art, there are many classical and folk forms in different parts and regions of the country. Of these two broad groups, there is no hard and fast rule for folk variety to learn and acquire proficiency in that art. From centuries, these art forms continued to be learnt, practiced and performed traditionally. Evidences of prevalence of these are available in the Veda-s, Śāstra-s, Purāṇa-s, in epics, in paintings, sculptures, and especially in oral traditions. Although Indian dance forms are framed with their own principles and distinctiveness, they share the same origin - the Nāṭyaśāstra (2nd century B.C). To know about the classical dance forms of India, one is to go through that earliest authoritative work, the Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata, where details about the principles are postulated exhaustively.

The theory of Indian classical dance forms cannot be understood and examined in isolation or only with one form. Because if one feature is more significant in one form, that might not be found in other style. But at the same time, the style may unfold another feature. Here in the present endeavour, the classical elements along with some special features are intended to discuss as a comparative study of the two enduring Indian classical dance traditions, Bharatnāṭyam and Sattrīyā. Although these two dance forms are practised and developed in different regions, both the styles are framed in the classical dance collage based on some specific principles of Indian classical dance field.
With a view to analysing such principles of the two traditions mentioned above, an attempt will be made in the following pages to dilate some points.

1.01.01 Objective:

The objective of the study is to bring to the light all the details about the two dance forms viz., Bharatnāṭyam and Sattrīyā, which possess enormous scope for further elaboration. In comparison to other dance forms, Sattrīyā is a lesser known form outside its place of origin. Only recently it got recognition of the national authority and subsequently, attempt have been made by scholars and artistes to establish it as an art dance. Earlier this dance style was pursued and practised as a device for offering devotion to God, and that too within some restrictions of the Sattra\(^1\) circle. There is no denying the fact that despite its inherent art qualities, little attention was paid to that part and at certain stages, it tended to be deformed and deteriorated. But since its inherent artistic and aesthetic qualities are now discovered and have been established by scholars and connoisseurs, it has now attained the status of art dance. Now it is necessary to investigate and analyze in detail about what sort of artistic and aesthetic values are there in the form. Only through an attempt of comparing with another form as well as searching the Śāstric elements in it, the dance could be established to be at par with other dance forms of India.

\(^1\) It is a religio-cultural institution envisaged by Śāṅkaradeva (1449 to 1568 AD) and his apostolic successor, Mādhavadeva for the purpose of devotional services which included song, dance and drama. Cultivation of these arts started in that institution and these were followed traditionally as parts of offering devotion to God. Afterwards, the dance form came to be known as Sattrīyā because of its nativity in Sattra.
It is a fact that almost all the dance forms of India has marched forward gradually attaining new dimensions and thus flourished independently. But much has to be done in this direction particularly in case of Sattrīyā. On the other hand, a thing can be judged by comparing with other similar type. That is why comparative assessment is felt in the present case.

In this study a detail discussion will be made as far as possible on traditional as well as present repertoire of both the styles. Use of Āṅgika in two forms with their distinctiveness, basic dance units (Adavu of Bharatnāṭyam and Māṭi-ākharā of Sattrīyā), body structure and movement, floor and space choreography etc., with references from some authoritative treatises like the Nāṭyaśāstra, Bharatārṇav, Abhinayadarpana, Saṃgītaratnākara and from traditional Guru-s, exponents and scholars etc., will have to be discussed in case of Sattrīyā so that these traits could be revealed and then only the dance could be established to be at par with others.

1.01.02 Necessity:

With such objectives in view, an analytical and descriptive discussion about the specialties and the technicalities of Sattrīyā has been considered as a must. And thereby, it is also hoped that such a work will provide scope for further elaboration so as to prosper and develop the style in the right direction. This kind of attempt would make it inter alia, easily accessible for new aspirant learners. So the study will try to deal in some detail about the grammatical and technical
aspects of Sattrīyā which has not so far been done exhaustively. Because till now the method of imparting training in almost all cases is transmitted through oral tradition only.

A scientific approach is needed to investigate the details of the dance i.e., the dance along with its indispensable parts of vocal and instrumental music. However, the last part is a vast subject which will require sufficient time and space to establish in a proper format. With a view to dealing in some detail about that, it is proposed to discuss these points, not in detail but in a simple way.

1.01.03 Importance:

Although different dance forms of India originated from the same source, in course of development these attained some peculiarities of their own at certain stages and also for the geographical and other factors. As such, Bharatnāṭyam originated in the South India, whilst Sattrīyā emerged in the North-east part of the country. Naturally, some regional differences crept into both the forms, which could establish their own identity. For example Bharatnāṭyam distinctly maintains the Tānḍava and Lāsya with their own body movements, cadences and gaits, besides using definite postures and hand gestures. In the same way, Sattrīyā also maintains some peculiarities in case of body postures, cadences, gaits and hand gestures etc for specific grace. But in case of Sattrīyā, all the above traits are not fully discussed technically and have not been established in that way; although some pioneer works have been done by a few scholars in that
direction. In the performance-pattern, the line of development and use of appropriate forms of vocal and instrumental music in Bharatnātyam has already been determined. While in case of Sattrīyā such demarcation and co-ordination are not yet established fully. Only the practice is traditionally maintained. In the present repertoire, the Sattrīyā being Bhakti oriented starts from offering obeisance to Lord (Krṣṇa or Rāma) or to Guru Śaṅkaradeva. Further elaboration in that part is maintained according to the necessity or selection of themes. And ultimately it comes to the conclusion with paying obeisance to God, which is again repeated with the sentiment of Bhakti or devotion. In Bharatnātyam also, the same procedure is followed to some extent.

Observing all these points, it is felt to be of great necessity for Sattrīyā to go ahead and reach an equal status with other dances. That is possible only through the aforesaid process. A conscious section of the society felt that the cultural heritage of each region is to be revived and re-established, which on the other hand will strengthen the bond of unity and understanding among different communities in the vast country like India. From these points, the necessity of the proposed study could be justified.

1.01.04 Methodology:

The methodology applied in the study will comprise of discussing literary works particularly old Indian treatises on the subject. This would be applicable for acquiring information and knowledge of both the dance styles. But it is found
that there is a dearth of reading material for Sattrīyā and, therefore, interviews with experts exponents and scholars on the line would be necessary to acquire firsthand knowledge. For that purpose a questionnaires was prepared and oral discussions have been made with the expert Sattra in-mates and other knowledgeable persons on that line. The proposer had already visited some important Sattra-s, including those of Majuli (river island)- which is considered as the vibrant centre of Sattrīyā culture. The interviews were recorded including video graphs to analyse and compare with the other dance form, that is, Bharatnāṭyam. Measurement of different forms of the body in different situations and actual position was analysed to compare with such set norms as available in classical treatises.

Therefore, the methodology applied is mainly descriptive and analytic which comprises of interviews and oral discussions particularly in case of Sattrīyā, besides discussing some classical and local texts. Library works were also done but exhaustive field work for Sattrīyā was necessary.

1.02.00 Origin of dance:

The word ‘dance’ itself suggests ‘joy’, ‘expression’ and ‘creation’. The journey of this creative art was started with human feelings, ideas and imaginations. In the primitive days, dance was used to appease the natural spirit. The primitive people adopted the rhythmical movements of animals, imitated chirping of birds and other sounds of nature and framed their own body
movements to express their feelings and emotions’. The famous musician Curt Sachs and the dance critic in his ‘World History of Dance’ comments that ‘observing the oldest dance forms, it seems to be a heritage from animal ancestors’. He regards it as a "spontaneous expression of gaiety". In course of time, dance became the art of physical movements with gestures which was regulated by rhythm. The sense of rhythm has added a formalized technique in dance. It is indispensable part in dancing and also the basic element of music. Later on, this expressive medium of human through dance and music begin as partners in service of God’.

In the history of three most ancient and famous civilizations -- Greek, Egypt and Indian, we get references of dance, which was used as one of the devices in religious practice.

The art of dance was very ancient in Indus Valley civilization and it originated from the same source and ideas of the above two civilizations i.e., Greek and Egypt. The age-old dance movements gave rise to different beautiful dance forms. The principles for these are based on the authoritative works which postulated these norms. In almost all parts of India, temple dance was practised as a ritual device by the priests and the Devdāsī-s. These dance forms in India emerged centering around religious and other institutions of alike nature.

Besides temple dancing, dance was performed on some special occasions like celebration of New Year, agricultural activities, social festivals, group works etc. From the days of yore to the present time, dance became an inevitable part
of these auspicious occasions. The Nāṭyaśāstra and the Abhinayadarpana also narrated the same in the following lines -

‘Nṛttāṁ tatra narendrānāṃbhīṣe ke mahotsave |
Yātrāyāṁ devayātrāyāṁ vīvāhe priyasaṅgame ||23||
Nagarānāmāgārānāṁ praveśe putrajanmanī |
Śubhārthibhiṁ prayoktavyaṁ maṅgalyaṁ sarvakarmabhiḥ’ ||24||

According to the Śloka, those who require good luck on some auspicious occasions, then ‘Nṛttā’ should be performed. The celebration like coronation ceremony or investiture ceremony of Kings, a religious festival, a procession with an image of God or Goddesses, a marriage ceremony, reception of a friend, entry into a new town or house and birth of a son etc; dance is to be performed. Such statements are provided and defined by Nandikeśvara in his monumental work mentioned above. Getting the evidence of survival of dance in ancient ceremonies and festivals, the folk style of dancing also emerged. Some folk dances are centered around hunting, which was further developed as martial dances. The dances of Puruliya and Konkan areas, Kallaripattu (Kerela) and three varieties of Chhau (from some parts of Bihar, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, with its three varieties - Puruliā, Mayurbhanāj and Saraikelā) fall in this category. The dances are now performed in stylized way as compared to earlier

\[\text{\textcopyright 2 Nandikeśvara, Abhinayadarpana, Śloka no. 23 and 24.}\]

\[\text{\textcopyright 3 Chhau has been developed to such extent that it received the recognition as one of the major dance forms of India.}\]
forms. The folk dances of Assam, Punjab and Kerela etc., are mainly performed in harvest festivals and on other occasions too. These kind of dancing are dominated by an inherited tradition rather than innovation or improvisation in technique. In a nutshell, folk dances provide an important framework to understand ancient culture, myth, conviction, believes and social context of a particular region.

Among various forms, some sets of dance inherit the influence of the Veda-s, Śāstra-s, epics and religion. Some of these have started the journey of being more refined, descent, stylized interpretative dance form. With the admixture of these qualities, dances evolved in the society and these heterogeneous dance tradition for the first time, was sub-divided as Deśi and Mārgī by Māṭāṅga in his Br̐haddeśī as dance belonging to some particular region and dance belonging to a path (mostly principles of Śāstra-s) respectively.

1.03.00 Indian classical dances, stages of development and their traits:

The art of dancing in ancient India could perhaps be called as temple art ‘not because it was a part of the activities of temple, but because its aim was the perception of spiritual identification’. It is not just a performance but also a Śādhanā, a Tapas and a way to pursue Bhakti. Dance identifies itself in sacrificial rites, in prayer and in prophetic vision, both for the artiste and for the appreciator.

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4 Improvisation and presentation technique have now taken place in stage performances; which is a recent trend of development.
Thus in India the art of dancing is blended with spiritual and religious ideas throughout the ages. The Indian mind has always ‘sublimated the fine arts from their mundane origin to the high level of spirituality. This art form of dance is intricately interwoven with painting, sculpture etc.’ As Rukmini Devi remarks on this context

“A painter sees beauty of line and colour, the sculptor sees the grace and the form, the actor sees portrayal of life, and the musician and poet alike see the very embodiment of poetry in motion.”

The Veda-s are treated as the first recorded evidence of Indian classical dance tradition. The Rüg Veda formed the general substratum of major linguistic formulation relevant in the dance and the Yayur Veda had laid down the foundation of gestures and postures, while the Sāma Veda provided resources for music and chanting. And the Atharva Veda propagated the sentiments of Bhāva-s and Rasa-s, which are the essential core of a classical Indian dance form. As Kapila Vatsyayan comments-

’Sām-veda contributes greatly to this art by starting the concept of the Mārgī and the Deśī types of music and dancing. This is the first conscious distinction between what was to be termed classical and popular in years to come.’

It is further stated how Indian classical dance had enormous impact on all the other arts of India. This is available from the 2nd century B.C till the 19th

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5 Devi Rukmini; The Spiritual Background of Indian Dance, Journal of the Vivekananda Kendra Patrika, 1981.

6 Vatsyayan Kapila; Classical Indian Arts in Literature and the Arts, p -173
century, including the two great epics, the Rāmāyanā and the Māhābhārata. Only such a flourishing tradition of performance could have given incentive to the writer of the Nātāyaṇyaśāstra to codify the theatrical art in that monumental work.

This work has categorized various forms in region-wise forms. In the form of Pravṛtti-s of the four categories; the Odāra-māgadhī is mentioned as prevalent in north eastern part of the country. This region includes Aṅga, Baṅga, Kaliṅga, Videha, Nepāla, Tāmralipta and Prāgjyotisa-pura (the ancient name of present Assam). Within this region, we have the dance forms like Odissi, Manḍipuri and Satṛṭyā, flourishing in their own way of having some distinctiveness. Bharatnāyam dance style comes under the Dāksinātyā Pravṛtti (the region between southern ocean and the Vindhya Mountain). Various graceful dances, gestures with music are used in this Pravṛtti.7 However, there seems to have been some points which were not included in an elaborate way. As a premier work, it could not cover all the details of forms and their distinct features. For example, mention of the four Vṛṛtti-s in that work did not cover all the regions of the vast country like India. The Bhārati Vṛṛtti as one of the four Vṛṛtti-s seems to have been some limitation form the point of geographical area of the period when the work was composed8. The four Vṛṛtti-s

7 q.v Tarlekar. G.S: Studies in the Nātāyaṇyaśāstra, p.-23 quoted from Harsa Carita Ek Sanskritik Adhyayan, by Vasudev Saran Agrawal, pp- 33,34)
8 Ibid, p- 117
described in the Nāṭyaśāstra can be termed as styles of speech and action in plays. These are as - Bhāratī Vṛtti (prominence is given to speeches), Sāttvati (qualities of Sattva, reflects mental situations, joy, vigour etc.), Ārābhatī (various deceptions, hypocrisy, jugglery etc.) and Kāśikī (various kinds of dancing and music with enjoyment of love).

All the present Indian classical dance forms point towards the Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata as their original source of codification. But some works of later period like - the Daśarūpaka by Dhananjaya (10th century), the Abhinayadarpana (11th century A.D.), the Hasta Laksāna Dipikā, the Bharatārṇava, the Nrityaratnāvali by Jayasena (13th century), the Saṃgītaratnākara by Śarngadeva (13th century A.D.), Śrī Hastamuktāvalī by Śubhaṅkara (13th to 14th century A.D.) etc. These are also taken as sources of various forms of dance. Moreover, in the Nāṭyaśāstra itself, there are varieties of terminology which are interpreted differently by different commentators and critics. Many terms are repeated over and over again; each time with slightly different connotations and to get its correct interpretation, one cannot just study the relevant Chapters but has to understand them taking into account the interpretation elsewhere in other Śāstra-s.

In Indian dance traditions, dance of Śiva is said to have existed before Bharata and it was known as Tāndava and Lāśya. Tāndava was taught by

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9 Manuscript copy of the work found elsewhere in Nepal (an old Mithila country). An Assamese gloss by Jāgarā was discovered in a Sattra of Assam.
Tanḍava, the disciple of Śiva. It was the more virile form, while Lāsyā presented by Pārvatī, was the feminine and graceful style. A point to be noted in this context is that the similarities of Tānḍava with the Nrūṭta of Śuddha Paddhati is further defined by Śāṅgadeva, who commented on the development of dances prevailed in his time, from the Tānḍava and the Lāsyā of the days of yore. After describing the origin of Nāṭya and its presentation before Śiva, he refers to the inclusion of Nāṭya at the instance of Śiva. While Tanḍu, the attendant of Śiva taught Bharata the Tānḍava Nrūṭta, Pārvatī, the consort of Śiva demonstrated the gentle form of Lāsyā. Bhārata handed down Tānḍava to human whilst, through Usā (the daughter of the demon king Bāna, of Sonitpura, i.e., ancient Assam), Lāsyā reached to the Gopī-s (women folk) of Dwārakā, the women of Sāurāstra and ultimately the women folk of all regions. Thus the Nrūṭta tradition of Śāṅgadeva’s time also supports the contention of Bharata’s Nāṭya\textsuperscript{10}.

In the Original text of the AD an anterior work, it is also found in this way-

\begin{quote}
\textit{‘tanḍunā swagānāgranāyā bharatāyanyadīdiśat}

lāsyāyāgraṭ: prītvā parvtyā samadīdiśit

budhādhvāḥtha tānḍavam tānḍormatyaibhyo munayohbadan,

parvatītvanuśāsti sma lāsyam vānātmajāmusāṁ,}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10} Ramanathan N: Musical Forms in Saṃgītaratnākara, pub. by Sampradaya, Chennai, Ed-1, 1999 (pp- 11,12)
It is therefore, obvious that although the above account is traditional, it indicates the prevalence of the Lāsya type of dancing in ancient Kāmarupa i.e., Assam.

The present aspect of Tānḍava or Lāsya as codified and described in detail by Bharata and his successors, bring to the light the possibility that it was the Lāsya which, with assimilation of many other aspects of Nātya, developed later on into a separate tradition of dance style. The Nātyaśāstra itself has described many forms of dance compositions.

While dealing with different dance traditions of various regions, Mataṅga in his work Brhaddeśī has dealt at length about Deśī music and dance. Deśī could be grouped into two sections – one, the traditional poses, movements and sequences under the head of Sthāna-s, Lāsyāṅga-s, Gaits etc., and the second, the distinctiveness of several regional dances.

After the oldest modes have been set forth and defined by Bharata, his immediate followers began codifying and describing the additional sequences in their treatises like - the Abhinayadarpana, the Saṅgītaratnākara, the Śrīhastauktāvali, the Nrtyamanjurī, the Nruttaratnāvalī, the Abhinayacandrikā etc., which supplemented the classical repertoire and provided

11 Abhinayadarpana, Śloka no. 6
as source of different aspects of dance and music.

The history of Indian dance forms, especially based on Śāstra-s as discussed above, we find that these forms flourished at the patronage of kings and royal families. The Chola period in South and Gupta period in North were known as golden era for art and culture. In the 14th – 15th centuries a mode of awakening rose in the field of dance and music at the wake of great Vaisñava movement in India. New creations and compositions were done in most of the forms of art including fine and performing arts. Later, with the invasion of Muslims, who considered it almost a scandal to use music for divine worship, dance found its way into the courts as a form of entertainment. Also due to the apathy of people with regard to their religion, many in the society used dance for erotic pleasure. When the British came to rule, for them dance was mainly a social function. During that time degeneration was continued. With these developments the aim, purpose and goal of dance changed from time to time. It could be looked as a diamond which has lost its luster due to those sorts of rusts.

However, from the middle of the 20th century, a new renaissance in Indian dance had aroused to revitalize the artistic sense of Indian culture. It was due to the dedication of artistes, connoisseurs and scholars like Rukmini Devi, E. Krishna Iyer, Chenna Reddy, Bhemapati in south, Sambhu Maharaj, Kalika Bindra brothers, Archan Maharaj etc. in north and others who strove to restore the lost dignity and spiritual sanctity of this art. And today, dance which was prevalent in temples and religious institutions have come to the auditorium
blending with artistic and aesthetic visions.

Here it is necessary to mention some of the major dance traditions which have been acknowledged as major dance forms of India. Starting from the north-east region we can mention Manipuri, Odissi, Sattriyā, dance traditions. In north Kathak and Chaou flourished with their varieties. In South Kathākalī, Kūdīyattam, Kuchipūḍī, Mohinī Āttam and Bharatnātīyam, etc. all these forms posses their own traits and Characteristics. In this work Sattrīyā and Bharatnātīyam styes are dealt in detail but it is necessary to provide a small note on other dance forms.

**Manipurī**: Manipurī, dance is from the state Manipur. It has not one but many forms of that region associated with the name. These are like Maibi, Natā Saṅkīrtan, Manohorsai, Dhop Pālā or even Martial arts (sword and spear) etc. In the reign of King Bhagyachandra (1764 A. D) who is a staunch follower of Gāudīya Vāisṇavism, invited many expert, artist and Guru-s to analyze, codify and systematized this dance form. The Rāsa dance and present costumes of Manipurī are attributed to the King’s dream. He also has written a manual on dance called Govinda Saṅgīta Līlā Vilāsa. The contemporary Rāsa Līlā is reconstructed by the trinity of Manipuri dance viz Amudon Sharma, Amubi Singh and Atomba Singh.

The repertoire of Manipurī dance consist of following items-Saṅkīrtan – it is a kind of worship to lord Krūsaṇḍa and Rādhā, perform as a
prologue to the performance of Rāslīlā. It is performed in two styles – Puṃg Cholam (drum dance) and Kartāl Cholam (cymbal dance).

**Rāslīlā-** it is a kind of dance drama of seven types, five of them depicting the stories of divine love of Lord Krūṣṇa and Rādhā. These are Mahā Rās, Vasanta Rās, Kuṅja Rās, Nītya Rās and Diva Rās. Two other Rās-s which depict stories of childhood pranks and valorous deeds of young Krūṣṇa are Udukhal Rās and Gopa Rās.

The technique of Manāipūrī dance is distinctly divided into Nūpi Jágoi or Lāsya (feminine grace) and Nipā Jágoi or Tānḍāava (masculine, forceful and vigorous). In Lāsya the body must remain natural, soft and supple. The moments must be rounded and continuous. The Tānḍāava or masculine grace is divided into three styles i.e., Krūṣṇa Tānḍāava very similar to Lāsya with addition of more sitting and jumping movements suitable to childhood pranks of young Krūṣṇa. The second one is Cholom Tānḍāava having feet and knees apart and has forceful, stylized and dignified moments of the body. The last variety is Prasāranā, here the legs are stretched to the extreme level and has more free and vigorous movements. These are executed in Thaṅg (sword) and Tā (spear) dance. Different Bhaṅgī Pareṅgs and Cāli-s are used as Basic dance units in Rāslīlā. The Abhinaya part is done in the items like Natāpāla. Here mainly different Nāyikā-s are portrait. The Srṅgāra Rasa is divided in 64 divisions called as ‘Rasahumphumari’. When Abhinaya is performed by men it is called Nipā Bāsak and by women group is called Nupi Bāsak.
The Music used in Manipuri dance is called ‘Nataśēśak’ blending with Khulaʿnggišei (Manipuri folk style) and Kīrtan style of Bengal music. Traditionally the songs are sung from Vāisānava literature in Sānskrīt, Meithili, Braj, and old Bengal etc. written by devotional poets like Jayadeva, Vidyapati, Chandidas and others.

Odāisī: It is a classical dance form of Orissa and rooted with the temples of this region. The rhythm, Bhaṅgī-s and Mudrā-s have a peculiar blending in this dance style. It is based mainly on the infinite love of Rādhā and Krūsa, they used to dance Jayadeva’s Gīta Govinda which later on became the part and parcel of Odāisī dance tradition. The Devadāsī or Māhārī of the temples were the only ones who kept the dance tradition alive. In the patronage of Ganga dynasty, specifically in the period of Cholagangadeva (1077 – 1147) built the Jagannath temple and employed many Devadāsī. Later on Gotipua system was also introduced in the temples. The Vāisānavaite followers did not approve the dancing by women. Hence, boys dressed as female and started performing outside the temples. During this period innumerable lyrics were composed by Vāisānava poets on Rādhā and Krūsa and they chose Gotipua dance as a medium to spread the cult. Later on women used to take active part in this dance.

The basic position of this dance is called Chauka (half seated). The most noticeable feature of this dance style is Tribhaṅgī (three bent) suppose to have influence from Krūsa Bhaṅgī. The gestures and postures of this dance
style are based on the Nātyaśāstra, the Abhinayadarpana and the Abhinaya Chandrikā. The repertoire of Odissī dance consists of Maṅgalācaran where the dancer dedicates herself to the Lord. Then follows the Sthāyī Nrītya or Batu Nrītya, a pure dance item. Third one is Pallavī, it is based on Rāga-s and Bol-s. Here the Nrītta is performed by stylized sculptural poses and movements. The next one is an Abhinaya Pada. No performance of Odissī is complete without Asītapadī-s, so a dancer has to perform an Asītapadī from Gīta Govinda. The last item is Mokhya nrītya, a pure nrītta accompanied by rhythmic syllables. Here a dancer becomes ecstatic and his/her mind merges with the supreme God.

To evolve this dance style from temple to stage, many scholars and connoisseurs tried their best but among them the legend late Kelucharan Mahapatra prospered it to a high level art form among the other class dances.

Kathak: In north India a form of dance was flourished in the prescient of temples till 15th century. Kathak is originated with the traditions prevalent in that region. Later on during the rise of Mughal Empire the dance came to courts of kings and royals and it added the influence of Persio-Arabic culture. During 16th to 18th centuries, the miniature painting has provided a revealing evidence of the developments of a dance form which ultimately came to be known as Kathak. The Raga- Ragini paintings of Mughal style also provided a firm base to develop different Abhinaya-s specially Nāyikā-s of this dance style. Finally this dance style blended with the Hindustani music which became a backbone to the style and developed various dance technique parallel to the musical repertoire.
Like the miniature painting Kathak follows the two dimensional aspect in
dance technique. Mostly straight lines are applied in the body. The basic stance is
Sama pada position. For gestures and postures this dance style follows the
treatises like the Nātāyaṇastra, the Abhinayadarpana. The characteristic
features of this dance style is jumps and pirouettes which is commonly known as
Chakkara, using one foot as a centre and the other foot is to make circles. This
part is mostly used in the finale of a performance. Kathak dance follows
Tāndava (virile) and Lāsyā (soft, feminine) technique in pure dance.

A Kathak recital starts with Āmad, an invocation to God (Ganesha). Then
Tritāl is performed based on mnemonics. The other pure dance items are Torā,
Tukrā and Parana. In Tatkāra a dancer has to perform different metrical cycles of
specific Tāla showing the Sam. This is the most complex part of the repertoire,
for this a dancer must have mastery over the rhythmic patterns. Gatbhāva is an
Abhinaya item, here a dancer interprets the word with gestures. Gata Nikās is
another brief Abhinaya piece based on life Kṛṣṇa and Gopi-s. In Nāyikā
Bheda different Nāyikā-s are portrayed by a dancer. The richest part of Abhinaya
is Thumrī where various Bhāva-s are expressed to interpret different state of
mind and emotion. A Kathak dance recitals ends with a fast tempo with a pure
dance item called Tarāṇā. The name of some exponents of this dance form has
already been provided.

Chao: the word Chao is derived from the word Chhāyā means shadow. There are
three varieties are found in this dance style – Mayurbhānj (prevalent in the
south-eastern part of Orissa), Serāikalā and Puruliā (from Bihar and Bengal region respectively). There is no recorded history of Chao dance, it is purely deśī type transmitted by oral tradition. However in Kalinga Kingdom a flourishing tradition of Martial art was practiced by the warriors. The contribution of tribal dance, martial exercises and reflection of classical tradition are seen in Chao dance form.

The basic position of this dance is Chauka and Tribhaṅga but in virile form. All the dance units like Topaka-s, uflis and bhaṅgī-s emerge from these two basic stances. The dance begins with Raṅgabājā- behind the curtain which might be a reminiscent of Purvaraṅga. This is followed by Cāli- means walking or entering different characters. In this item instrumentalists play different tunes suitable for different character. In Mayurbhaṅj Chao different gaits are used to establish the characters without the aids on masks like the other two forms Serāikalā and Puraliā. Although there are many common points between Sarāikalā and Mayurbhaṅj styles while Sarāikalā is more lyrical and the latter one exhibits a complexity of movements of torso and lower limb. After this the Nāc is performed which is blended with pure dance and dramatic actions. Nāṭkī is the final stage of the performance. It leads the whole tempo to faster level. The music used in this style is a mixer of folk and classical styles. Some Hindustānī rāga-s are used by the instrumentalists. Dhol, Mahuri, Teulā, Nāgādā are the main instruments used in this dance style.
**Kathākalī**: Kathākalī is the pantomimic dance drama tradition of Kerela which had its origin in the 17th century. In Malayalam, the word Kathākalī means story-play; kathā is story and kalī means to play. Several folk arts of that region like Theyyam and padayani to name a few had played an influential role in the stylization of Kathākalī. Influence of martial art Kalaripayattu is also highly visible in both the training exercises and acting elements of Kathākalī. Scholars opined that the tradition of Rāmanāttam got transferred as Kathākalī. This Rāmanāttam was written by Kottarakkara Thampuran, a local King of 17th century based on the epic Rāmāyana. The birth of Kathākalī dance tradition also relate to the similar tradition of Krūśṇāttam, a dance drama which enact the life of Lord Krūśṇa. Gradually towards the end of the 19th century, Kathākalī attained a high level of stylization. The Kerela Kala Manadalam has taken keen initiative to flourish this dance style in proper direction. This dance style has close affinity with the ancient treatises like the Nātyaśāstra, the Abhinayadarpanā and the Hastalakshana Dipikā. The classical influence on Kathākalī is found in its adaption of Kūdūiyāttam’s complex gestural codes, facial expression etc. It is a highly stylized form with forceful abstractions of body, movements, gestures and mime. This dance is traditionally performed by male artist only.

The most distinctive feature of this dance style is its Āhārya – costumes and make-up used by the dancers which make the characters larger than life. A typical rice paste is applied for facial make-up called chutti. Different colours are
applied for different characters like Paccā, Katti, Tātī, Teppu and Minnukku. If the character is Satvika, pure and divine then Paccā (green) make is used. For villain or anti hero-Rājasik and for demons- Tāmasik characters Tādī and Kāthi (beard and red) make are used respectively. In contrast to the other classical dance forms facial muscles play an important part in dancer’s training. The basic Sthāna is Manḍala Sthāna and in dance units rectangle and square patterns are used. The basic dance units are called Kalāsams. A Kathākalī recital begins with the sounding of drums, which play and important part in establishing the proper atmosphere the performance. A devotional number Todāyam is performed behind the curtain which is similar to Pūrvarāṅga. After Todāyam comes a pure dance item known as Pūrappadu. In this item the main characters, some time with their consorts enter the stage. After this the play or a particular scene chosen for the performance begins. Usually Nala Charitam, Kalyāna Sāugandhīkam, Bālī Vijayam, Sītā Swayamvaram etc. are performed in Kathākalī dance recital. All these items are usually based on Sopāna Saṅgīta.

Kūdīyāttam: Kūdīyāttam is one of the sophisticated art form of Kerela which literally means dancing, acting and performing. It is the most prominent survivor among different forms of traditional Saṅskṛīt theatre. Scholar opined that Kūdīyāttam is the only surviving tradition of ancient Saṅskṛīt plays as defined in the treatises. It is highly stylized remote and ritualistic show. Every movement timed to perfection, controlled and restricted to measured time limits. The history of this dance tradition is said to be 9th to 10th century back. Kulasekhara Varman,
the Royal dramatist of that period wrote two plays, Subhadrādhananjayam and Tapatīsamvanam are still performed by the Kūd[iyāttam artists.

The historical repertoire of Kūd[iyāttam includes two Prahasans, one attribute to the Pallava Kings Mahendra Varman of 7th century titled Mattavilāsa and Bhagavadajjukam by Bodhayana Kavi.

Kūd[iyāttam is an evolved dramatic form where both male and female performers can take part. The male characters are enacted by Cākyār-s and the women by Nā[ngiār-s. This dance style follows mainly two manual for training and presentation, these are Attaprakaram and Kramadipikā respectively. The highly developed codified system of hand gestures and superb technique of facial expression by eyes, eyebrows, lips and cheeks is the distinctive feature of this dance style. The Cākyārs are capable of expressing minute varieties of a Bhāva. Here the Nayanābhīnaya (eye expression) plays a dominant role.

Kuchipud[i: Originally this dance style is based dramatic form which was originated in Kuchipud[i village in Southern Part of India. The name of this dance form was derived from Kuchelapuram district, Andhra Pradesh. Earlier, this dance form was formerly executed by only men. Kuchipud[i dance was introduced in 3rd Century B.C. and it was initially performed at the temples only by the Brāhmin men, who are known as Bhagavathalu. Siddhendra Yogi, a gifted scholar and artiste, who lived in the 16th century gave a definite format and purified this ancient art. He was abstained from training women fearing that they might exaggerate the sentiments expressed and dispel it of its spiritual tone.
Kuchipudi became an all male domain. The female roles were also impersonated by men. Kuchipudi has now reduced to only a dance form. Female dancers can also perform this dance style. It has acquired its present form in the 20th century. A number of people were responsible for moving it from the villages to the performance stage. One of the most notable was guru Lakshminarayan Shastry. After him, a number of other luminaries would mould it into its present shape. Some notable names are Vempati Chinna Satyam, C.R. Acharyalu, and Dr. Nataraja Ramakrishna, Dr Uma Rama Rao etc.

The performance usually begins with some stage rites, after which each of the character takes entry on the stage and introduces him/herself with a dharavu (a small composition of both song and dance). It shares many common elements with Bharatnatyam repertoire. In solo performance Kuchipudi numbers include Jatiswaram and Tillānā' whereas in nrītya, it has several lyrical compositions reflecting the desire of a devotee to merge with God.

The items are based on classical Carnatic music. Some items are unique to Kuchipudi; specifically there is the Taraṅgam, a dancer must perform this item on a brass plate, placing the feet upon the raised edges. The dancer moves the plate with much balance. Sometime a dancer performs with two diyas (small oil-burning candles) also. Some Karanca-s, six Pādabhedas, and adugulu or adavu-s are used as basic dance units.

The dance style is based on the standard treatises, the Nāṭyaśāstra, the Abhinayadarpana and Bharatārnava of Nandikeshwara, which is sub-divided into Nattuva Mālā and Nātya Mālā. Nattuva Mālā is of two types — the Pujā dance performed on the Balipitha in the temple and the Kalika dance performed
in a Kalyāna Mandapam. Nātya Mālā is of three kinds — ritual dance for gods, Kalika dance for intellectuals and Bhagavatam for common place. The Natya Mala is a dance-drama performed by a troupe, consisting only of men, who play feminine roles.

**Mohinī Āttam:** This dance style of Kerela is framed on the lyrical elements and socio regional folk dances of that region. Mohinī Āttam is the dance of enchantress. Mohinī, the enchantress, is an incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu on the occasion of churning of mighty ocean by Deva-s and Dānava-s for Amṛtā or immortality. In that churning when the pot of Amṛtā arose in the ocean, the Dānava-s grabbed the reward, then lord Viṣṇu as a savior appeared as Mohinī and saved the Amṛtā by enchanting the Dānava-s with celestial enchanting dance. Scholars opined this dance style was in vogue in 13th century, which has the similarity with Abhinaya Kuttu mentioned in the Śilappadikaram. Mohinī Āttam was flourished in the patronage of King of Travancore Sri Karttika Tirunal Balramavarma (1724-1798) who is also the author of the Balarāmabharatam, the last work to be written in Saṁskṛt on the Nāṭyaśāstra and an important book for this dance style. He arranged his courtiers to promote this dance style in Kerela which came from Pradesa (Tamilnadu) in the name of Mohinī Āttam.

The basic postures and foot works of Mohinī Āttam has resemblance with Kathākali except the feet are planted flat on the ground and not balanced on the edges. Foot works are similar with the adavu-s of Bharatnātīyam also. It follows the revolution (spiral) body kinetics. The movements of eyeballs, eyelids and eyebrows are special features of this dance form. Mohinī Āttam follows a
parallel repertoire of Bharatnātāyam i.e., Chollukettu, Jatiswaram, Varnām, Padam, Tillānā, Ślokam etc. All these items are usually based on Sopāna Saṅgīta.

The Kerela Kala Mandalam, Nalanda headed by Dr Kanak Rele etc. are some institutes, taking initiative to flourish this dance style. Mohinī Āttam appears to be social art rather than a temple art and the effect derived is visual enchantment rather than bhakti. Of course all Indian classical dances have a religious fervour, are vehicles of worships, but some are more so than the others. Mohinī Āttam belongs to the latter category.

Observing the basic traits of class dance in traditions, sculptures, and paintings and mostly in Śāstra-s, some basic principles for class dance have been formulated. The structure of Indian classical dance and drama tradition are governed by three main categories – the first one is the mode of presentation (Dharmī). The second quality consists of style of presentation (Vṛtti) and the last one is the four fold areas of acting (Abhinaya). As a rule, the Nāṭya part includes both Nrūtta (pure dance) and Nrūtya (dance with expression and gesture) even these two have their separate identities in independent cases. Some basic features of Indian classical dance are noted below-

1. According to Indian context the term ‘classical’ means ‘Śāstriya’, which is derived from the root word Śāstra or classic treatises. Therefore it signifies that Śāstriya Nrūtya follows the principles laid down in the Śāstra-s or treatises penned on theatrical art.

2. Classical dance have the similar roots of devotional form and

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performed as temple rituals in service to God.

3. Continuous history or tradition, which helped the dance to theorize the structure of a specific style and legitimized at national level.

4. The teaching process of a classical dance form was carried by Guru-śisya paramparā (tradition of teacher-pupil relation). The Guru-s are specially male performers or practitioners.

5. A classical dance style should have a traditional repertoire for performance.

6. The four major elements of abhinaya aspects – Āngika (through body), Vācika (through dialogues). Āhārya (dress and décor and ornamentation) and Sāttvika (temperaments and involuntary states).

7. Elements of Nr̥tta (pure dance), Nr̥tya (interpretative dance) and Nāt̥ya (Abhinaya or acting).

8. Mode of presentation- Lokadharmī (realistic) and Nāt̥yadharmī (dramatic).

9. Elements of Rasa and Bhāva.

10. A dance style should maintain some peculiarity and distinctiveness of its own particular style.

11. Formalization in body movements, body alignments, gestures, gaits, postures etc.

12. Ekārtha i.e., single thematic presentation is done in classical dance.

13. Formalization in presentation which can be termed as ‘Mārgam’ or path.

14. A dance style should follow Ekāhārya i.e., a recital with same dress depicting different characters and situations while
performing. A dance style should maintain particular dress and décor for that dance form.

15. The music used in classical dance should be either classical or some traditional music, which are imbued with classic qualities.

16. A rich literary background is another important aspect of a classical dance.

17. Lastly, classical dance should be excellent in artistic and aesthetic qualities, which could endure in audience mind.

On the basis of the content of dancing and acting of classical dance along with some basic traits, two charts are provided below. These qualities of classical dance and traits of dancing and acting provided in the chart will be discussed with the two styles Bharatnātāyam and Sattrīyā subsequently.

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**Dancing**

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Nrūttā (Pure Dance)  Nṛtīya (Interpretative)  Nātīya (Abhinaya)

  Interpretative  Descriptive  Imaginative

  Static  Movement

  Sthāna  Pādabheda

  Upāṅga-s (minor limbs)
  ➢ eye brows,
  ➢ eyelids,

  Aṅga (major limbs)-
  ➢ head,
  ➢ chest,
  ➢ sides,
  ➢ hips,
  ➢ hands,
  ➢ thighs and feet.
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These charts are prepared on the basis of two charts given in the book 'Indian Classical Dance' by Kapila Vatsyayan.
Whole body-
- Manḍala bheda –Ākāšekī (arial), Bhaumī(earthly).
- Utplavana (leaping and jumping movements).
- Bharamārī (whirling movements).
- Čārī (gait).
- Karanā (whole body movement).
- Pindivandha(choreographic formation)- Gulma, Latā, Bhedyaka, Šrṅkhalā.

Abhinaya
(acting mostly used in dance)

Āngika
(body gesture)

Vācika
(verbal)

Āhārya
(costumes and makeup)

Śarīra
(belonging to body)

Mukhaja
(belonging to face)

Sākhā
(gesticulation by major limbs)-
- head,
- chest,
- sides,
- hips,
- thighs,
- hands and
- feet.

Sākhā
(gesticulation by minor limbs)-
- eye,
- eyebrows,
- eyelids,
- eyeballs,
- cheek,
- chin,
- nose etc.

Cesṭākṛta
(gesticulation by entire body)-
- Sthāna, Manḍala
  (feet pecposition)
- Āṅkura (suggestive)
- Nrṛttā (pure dance)
- Citrabhinaya (special representation of particular scene or ideas)

Sātvika
(involuntary state of mind)

- Stambha
  (paralysis)
- Sveda
  (prespiration)
- Romanica
  (horripilation)
- Svara-bheda
  (change of voice)
- Vepathu
  (trembling)
- Vāivarnya
  (change of colour)
- Āśru
  (weeping)
- Pralaya
  (fainting)

Bhāva-s
(nine state of mind)-
- Rati
  (love)