Chapter  - 7

Conclusion
Hindu religion originated in Vedic times. Temple is the cradle of Hindu culture preserved it. Culture is a culmination of different fine arts like poetry, sculpture, painting, dance and music including several other arts. Religion is a faith with several aesthetic aspects and moral values with intellectual views. It leads to build the life style of a person. To maintain the balance in the society with faith in religion and to preserve the cultural heritage, the temple was used as the main stream. For this, the temple in India was used not only as the place for prayers and as the alter of worship, but also as the seat of learning as a guide to the spiritual life. Hindus believe in the yogic method of attaining the MOKSHA. The Sagunopasana is the first stage where the idol worship is used to attain the Mokhsa through the next stage called Nirgunopasana, where no idol is needed. For the person, who does not know how to achieve all the types of yogic controls to attain bliss, can easily worship and pray God in the form of an idol.

Temple rituals depend on Aagamas. They are the essence of Vedas. Aagamas are of three types viz. Vaishnava, Saiva and Shakteya. Dance was a part of rituals in the temple. Without dance and music there was no worship in the temple. Gudisani (The Telugu word used for temple dancer) played a major role in the preservation of Lasyanartanam of the temple tradition as she was given more prominence in all activities of ritual performance. She had to present different types of dance items in the morning worship, evening worship, night worship and in festival worship as prescribed in Aagama Sastras. Dance was performed in three places in the temple viz. in Balipitham or in front of Sanctum sanctorum and in Kalyanamantapam in the precincts of temple and outside the temple. These dances are known as:

1. Agamanartranam - Ritual dance for spiritualisation at Balipitham
2. Aasthauanartanam (or) Kelika - For intellectuals at Kalyanamantapam.
3. Prabandhanartanam - A Parijatha performance for the common people outside the temple.
Kelika in a kings court is also a similar performance and is known as Kaccheri, Karnatakaam, Darbari, etc.

Dance in a temple was an auspicious offering to the presiding deity. So for this reason only a Gudisani (Temple dancer) who had dedicate her life for the service of the temple had to lead a pious life as mentioned in the scriptures. Formerly they used to spend their pious life with complete devotion and dedication to God as TAPASWINIS. Later on the social, political and economical influences dominently affected their life style and tempted them to have a hereditary right to perform temple duties, so that they could enjoy the lands of the temple. So the temple dancers used to adopt their relatives' children and dedicate them for the temple service. This situation gradually changed. Instead of adopting others children they wanted to have their own children. The heads and chiefs of the villages or towns exploited this situation for their selfish ends. This made the gradual degradatory of the social status of Gudisanis, who were previously having much regard in the hearts of the people. This situation created a separate class of dancing girls. The impact of the degradation of Gudisani had influenced on the dance art. This resulted in the fall of dance art particularly in the temple. So dance art was driven out of the temple. The dance art in the temple and dedication of dancing girls was abolished in the beginning of the 20th century. The influence of the Devadasi Act made the dancers to give up dance and seek the other professions. Hence then they were identified as Kalavantulu. The impact of devadasi act reflected in two ways. In one way it gave a new life to those communities of dancers who were looked down, in other way the art of dance lost its grandeur, greatness and prestige, the elite of the society and art lovers like Sri C Samba Murthy, Sri E Krishna Iyer and Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale took revolutionary steps to promote the dance art in Tamilnadu. They revived and developed the ‘Sadir’ the devadasi dance tradition of Tamilnadu by giving a new name “Bharatanatyam”. They strived hard to make the people to understand the richness of the dance art in India and its spirituality and aesthetics and science.
Like Sri V. Krishna Iyer, Dr. Nataraja Ramakrishna is striving to promote the dance traditions of Andhra Pradesh since four decades. This urge of his in promoting dance in Andhra Pradesh influenced some of the LASYA dance artistes. Smt. Induvadana and Smt. Vaidehi of Marampalli who participated in Kuchipudi Seminar to prove Kuchipudi dance as a classical one in National Level requested Dr. Nataraja Ramakrishna to promote their Lasya style of dancing which is distinct from Kuchipudi. So Dr. Nataraja Ramakrishna convened a seminar of Lasya dance artiste in 1970 at Rajahmundry on behalf of Andhra Pradesh Sangeeta Nataka Academy.

The 1970 Abhinayasaddassu christened the name “Andhranatyam” to the Lasya dance tradition of female artistes of Andhra Pradesh and also lead to the preparation of a syllabus. Later in 1982, syllabus of Andhranatyam with minor modifications was approved by the then Nirtya Akademy. The same syllabus with an addition of Perini Sivatandavam (for boys) was reapprved by a committee of the Telugu University in 1994. On 23rd January 1995 the Andhra Pradesh Government issued G.O.Ms. No.7 approving the introduction of courses in Andhranatyam at the certificate and Diploma levels in the Sri Tyagaraja Government College of Music and Dance at Hyderabad.

As per the G.O. the candidates of Andhranatyam applied for the certificate and diploma examinations which were supposed to be held on 18th May 1995 but were indefinitely postponed a day before without adequate reasons being given by the Telugu University. Swapna Sundari (a dancer) of New Delhi filed writ petition no. 9439. in May, in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, questioning the G.O. as well as the very validity of Andhranatyam. Responding to the above writ petition the only living devanartaki Smt. Saride Manikyamma approached the court for redressal. The High Court in its order No. 12808/1995 dated 1st June 1995; directed the Telugu University, pending the original writ petition No. 10399/1995 to conduct the examinations forthwith. Consequently upon this order the examinations were held. After this a festival in dedication to Durgamatha, “Navadurga Andhranatyam

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“Yajnam” was conducted for nine days from 3rd to 11th August by Andhra natyam Trust.


The female dance tradition which was mainly developed as Nritta, Nritya and Abhinaya pertaining to Lasya style of rendering which depended on Kaishik vritti was developed as “Andhranatyam” since two decades. To suit the modern theatre, the three types of traditional items constituted in a well-knit repertoire by the eminent artistes of the Yore and propogated by the eminent scholar, Guru Dr. Nataraja Ramakrishna. Some male artistes have taken up the task of propogating Andhranatyam.

Andhranatyam is now a stylised classical dance with natural expressions of Sathvikabhinaya.

Dance art of temple was mainly ritualistic and was a sacred one. And it was restricted to the precincts of the temple and it needs the continuity of the ritual performance. Ritual dances were prescribed and are to be performed according to the Agamas and proceedings of rituals. Avoiding rigid items of Agamanartana performance, the eminent artistes made some changes in the repertoire of Andhra natyam to suit the modern stage. This is an evolution not a revolution.

The present day young artistes need a pre planned technical approach. The whole night performance of kalapam had to be abridged for a 2½ hours performance. So the wide repertoire of Andhranatyam which is a culmination of three traditions has to be brought into a nutshell one. One has to be trained now with some primary items in the beginning, later giving scope for the major items. Though Jatiswaram, Swarapallavi, Sabdapallavi and some other items are not included in the syllabus as they are taught for stage
performance, now Andhranatyam artistes have plenty of time for further innovations with traditional values. Since two decades it has been the struggle of an independent, Pioneer Dr. Nataraja Ramakrishna. Now this dance form crossed all the obstacles and the younger artistes can develop and expand the technique without changing its structure.

In this thesis on Andhranatyam as a Lasya dance tradition I covered historical and technical aspects. I did not compare the Technique of Andhranatyam with other dance traditions which are existing in India. I have given more importance to Temple ritual dance and also covered the three dance traditions as they are in the present repertoire of Andhranatyam. One can also make a research study on different Bhamakalapam traditions which are developed in Andhra Pradesh.

Tradition which has the sacrosanct qualities has to be given a chance for new innovations along with the social changes that occur time to time.

Dance is a kind of yoga. It has sacrosanct qualities and the goal of a performer or practitioner is the attainment of “paramananda”. The constant sadhana of dance is one way of attaining the Moksha.
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