CHAPTER-7
MUSIC ‘THE SOUL OF KATHAK’

There is no totality in dance without music that is swar, taal and lyrics. To imagine dance without Taal is like a body without heartbeat. Rhythm and music plays a vital role to make dance rich. The music with a melodious composition sung, inspires the performer to express the different moods or abhinaya, which are expressed by poet in the lyrics composed and later the rhythm ornaments the entire dance. The dancer follows the rhythm played on tabla and add a special ornamentation with the footwork and pleasant sound of ankle bells create a great atmosphere. The spectators experience the parallel expressions and rhythmic patterns performed by the dancer, sung by the vocalist and played by the rhythmist. This is the totality, which really appeals to a learned and general class. Thus music is the important feature in Kathak dance.

As stated earlier, the origin of Kathak is of quite ancient period, having its root into temple. So, it goes without saying that Kathak dance had a religious music and therefore remains religious and devotional in temperament and mood. The earliest music in Kathak as found in chand, later prabandhak music was found during the medieval period. The kirtanas and dhrupad were the part of the music of Kathak dance. The religious and stylized music also had included the evolving forms such as hori, dhamar, pada, bhajan. During the Mughal period there was a vast change in musical aspect. The dance and music performed in temples before deity now became the form of entertainment for royal Lords. Instead of religious and devotional moods the form like thumri, dadra and gazal evolved and became a part of Hindustani music. In contrast the dhrupad style of singing that came into being during the rule of Raja Mansingh Tomar Gwalior (1468-1518 A.D.) was most pervasive classical music. This kind of music was used for the expressional abhinaya anga.

For the origin of Kathak it is been mentioned that two sons of Lord Rama practiced this style trained by Saint Valmiki in Uttar Ramayan. They use to sing and express the religious stories. The music was very much
religious and devotional in *Avadhi* style as they belong to Ayodhya. The reference of Kathak is also seen in *Mahabharat*.

“कथाकाश्चापरे राजनु श्रमण्य बनीकस : ।
दिव्याख्यानानी ये चापि पठन्ति, गणयुर्म्व दिर्जा : ॥

- महाभारत भादिपर्यः ॥

“Oh king the Kathak’s and also forest dwellers, ascetics and Brahmins sweetly recite the divine stories”.

The interpretation itself describes that mostly everybody recited and rendered the divine stories in this period.

With reference to Kathak, music is not only accompanying dance by various instruments but also equally skillful in chanting and reciting the various technical aspects.

In *Rugveda* it is mentioned that the artiste or reciter recites the different bols as per the weightage given and for proper pronunciation of particular vocabulary the artiste moves their head up and down, sideways. While in *Yajurveda* they recite by moving their hands up, down and sideways. Apart from this *Samveda* have its peculiar chants in *Swargaan*. Moving of head and hands is according to *matras (beats)* of *chand*. Every *chand* has different number of beats like:

1) *Gayatri chand* - 24
2) *Anushthup chand* - 32
3) *Trishtup chand* - 11
4) *Jagati chand* - 12

Every chand has got the different *matras (beats)* like *laghu* (ङ्रु), *plut* (पूत), *drut* (दृत), *anudrut* (अनुदृत), *cacpada* (काकपद). Every *richas (ऋचा)* of *Veda* are set to different *chand*. Many of this *richas (ऋचा)* are rendered in *chand* and during reciting, these *richas (ऋचा)* form the different *aakar*
As mentioned earlier that Kathak is connected with temples, and therefore instruments generally used are Uttar Hindustani like tabla, pakhawaj, harmonium, sarangi and the language used for thumri, hori, kavitt is Brij bhasha, Magdhi, Bhojpuri, Hindi and Avadhi. The abhinaya (nritya) aspect like astapadi, pada, bhajan, thumri, kavitt, kirtan are sung in these particular languages. It is composed in specific Raga and Taal and sung by the vocalist. The vocalists, instrumentalists and other musicians add the beauty by justifying the music into the style of particular Gharana. The rhythm instruments like tabla; pakhawaj is the life of entire dance presentation. It was in the Mughal era when Kathak was performed on Kirtanas, Bhajans and Dhrupad Dhamar. It is classical style of singing. Dhrupad is sung in chautaal with difficult and different rhythmic patterns and Dhamar of 14 beats is used at the time of depicting Hori, it is also set in the DeepchandlTaal of 14 beats. But both these Taal of 14 beats has different structure.
In Kathak right from the beginning till the end singing and playing on the instruments go at one and same time. In Kathak, with reference to Jaipur Gharana, the main feature of it is performing Solo. Though the time is demanding lot for contemporary work, but dancers of Jaipur Gharana have fulfilled the demand of time and have maintained and stuck to the original structure or the formation of Jaipur Gharana. The artiste needs to perform fulfilling the taste of spectators, as nationwide and worldwide spectators are influenced by today's time. Therefore it is very tough to come up as a solo dancer.

The solo dancers, especially of Jaipur Gharana pleases, convinces, and imparts the audience by performing high taste of different technical aspect of nritta and nritya. It is not exaggeration to say that eyes are focused on the figure of a dancer and maximum joy is given by the dancer. It is the accompaniment by musicians that makes the dance effective. Here one strongly feels like giving credit to musicians who are supporting the Kathak dance art form. The music and rhythm appeals mostly as they belong to one
family and Gharana that is Jaipur Gharana and therefore this Gharana is truly said the Gharana of totality.

In Jaipur Gharana there is a tradition of performing the dance on some lengthy and difficult Taal’s, but the priya (favorite) Taal performed in solo performance is Teentaal, sixteen beats. The dancer begins this Taal in vilambit laya. Before the dancer comes on stage, the vocalist, sarangi player, tabla player, pakhawaj player creates an atmosphere. One by one they express their specialties that capture the audience before the dancer come on stage. Thereafter the tabla player plays a vigorous uthan (उठान) of different rhythmic patterns concluding it with chakradar tihai, which makes the audience astonish and gives no choice except clapping and honoring to the skill of tabla player. After the uthan the dancer enters the stage, sometimes either by performing by Amad (आमद) or in a simple way by acknowledging everybody and briefing about the technical aspect he is going to perform. He begins with either Guru Vandana or the composition in praise of deity that is sung by the vocalist. Thereafter Thaat (थाट), Tode (तोड़े), Paran (परन), Tatkar (तत्कार), Kavitt (कवित्त) and many other technical aspects are perform. The dancer is equally skillful like musicians, where he attracts the audience by skillful presentation and leaves no choice except receiving a huge applause.

In Kathak dance reciting the different technical aspects is called Padhant. Padhant is either done by Guru, a skillful Padhant karta or the dancer himself. Reciting the different compositions of different masters and gurus is a difficult task hence the Padhant proves the caliber, power and stamina of a dance because dancing and reciting the compositions one by one requires the lot of riyaz. The act of Padhant brings life to the presentation as it has in built music.

A relation of dancer and audience is built during the performance due to the rhythmic patterns performed. Kathak has the quality of performing variety of such rhythmic patterns like Aad, Kuad, Biad, Sam, Visam, Atit, Anagat and the 5 yatis that is Samayata yati, Gopucha yati, Mridanga yati,
Pipalika yati, Strotagata yati and the 5 jatis that is Tishra, Chatushra, Khand, Mishra, and Sankirna. The present researcher feel proud to say that dancers of Jaipur Gharana though perform Teentaal (One of the favorite Taal) they do lot of Gati-bhed and Jati-bhed that is blending all different jati’s in chatushra jati and performing it at ease without editing or cutting off any beat or Zarb (fraction of unit of beat). Here the instruments like tabla and pakhawaj are played for accompaniment that adds the beauty to the entire presentation. As per Acharya Sarangdev the combination or coming together of singing, playing of instruments and dance is termed as Music, hence rightly called “गीतं, बाद्रयं, तथा नृत्यं, त्रृयं संगीतम् उच्चयोते “ and hence vocal is important aspect of nritya anga where vocalist and poet are equally appealing with the dancer. Along with dance bhajan, thumri, pada, etc are sung. The expressions expressed in the composition are parelley depicted by dancer. Sometimes dancer comes forward and sing a line repeatedly for three to four times which is than continued by the vocalist. Sometime the different instruments are used to depict the mood of the composition for example like for Karuna rasa or sensitive mood, Violin is used while if the mood of joy has to be depicted than the Sitar is used. Not only this in dance-drama for creating an atmosphere sometime Flute, Dholak, Sarod, Sarangi, Tanpura, Clorionet, Sitar and many other instruments are played as per requirement. Sometimes it is so interesting in the finale where jugalbandi or sawal-jawab takes place spontaneously between the musician (tabla player) and the dancer. In language of Kathak it is called as “Upaj-anga” (spontaneous improvisation). The dancer performs the different and difficult rhythmic patterns that are followed by tabla player. Sometimes the skillful dancer does not permit tabla player to follow him, dancer simply performs on lehra, nagma or theka. Here ghungroo (ankle bells) plays a vital role as an instrument of dancer that reaches to all and easily understanding the rhythmic patterns performed by the dancer. This ghungroo are of brass metal and had a pleasant sound. The sound and rhythm is created with the stamping at different speed like the dugun, tigun, chaugun and athgun. Thus in Jaipur Gharana there is a
tradition of performing dance on some lengthy difficult Taal like Jhaptaal, Ektaal, Dhamar, Savari, Rudra, Raastaal and many more.

Thus in all three aspects the contribution of experts is required that too with an understanding. With the expertise knowledge of every artiste, dancers of Jaipur Gharana have always tried to give varieties by experimenting on different rhythms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
1 MARG (English), Page -172 - Dr. Shri Sunil Kothari