INTRODUCTORY NOTE
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Punjab occupies a most important and unique position in the early history and culture of the sub-continent because of its oldest civilization. The grandeur of ancient Punjab was the existence of Harappan culture which made it the leader of the most ancient civilized world. The Aryans came in waves from across the Himalayas and settled in Punjab ousting the original residents and pushing them southwards. However, in the parts of that region traditions of what had been an advanced culture still continued. In Eastern Punjab, the Aryans did not face any stiff resistance from the local population. According to K. Antonova, G. Bongard-Levin, G. Kotovseky, the Dravidian languages exerted a marked influence in Indo-Aryans ones, although their interaction was of short duration. This fact finds support from linguistic analysis of Rig Veda and other samhitas. As the Indo-Aryans tribes advanced across Northern India their social and political organisation became more advanced. By and by a new culture took birth which was the amalgamation of Aryan and local tribe's achievements, giving rise to some sort of common culture.

1. A History of India, (Book I), P 22.
Punjab occupied a great seat of spiritual philosophy and learning. It is claimed that Rig Veda was composed in Punjab. The Puranas and Mahabharata were also written in Punjab. Similar has been the case with respect to the composition of Ramayana (by Rishi Valmiki). The ashram where Valmiki lived was located in Punjab, the site of which is about 11 Kms from Golden Temple at Amritsar. The discourse of Gita to Arjuna by Lord Krishna was given on soil of Punjab. Guru Nanak who preached the doctrine of universal brotherhood was born and brought up in Punjab. Adi Granth too was composed in Punjab.

Amongst the arts, dance is the most primitive and the most sophisticated. There is no civilisation or culture in the world where human bodily movements as a vehicle of expression of joy and sorrow are not recognised. Even the animals express their inner feelings by bodily movements. The earliest cave paintings and sculptures provide ample evidence to the urge of man to dance. This urge gave rise to many forms of folk dances depending upon various customs and geographical situations, despite the great variations and multiplicity in forms and styles. In folk arts, folk dance has its uniqueness for overwhelming quality of spontaneity, of participation of every one, without any artificial barrier between
the performer and the audience. The intimate connection of folk arts with the daily life, be it hunting, fishing, sowing, harvesting or worship, links the people with one another.

Most important amongst the arts are music, dance, poetry and literature. The melody of beautiful music charms people and even tames animals. The beauty of flower, the rhythm of a dance; the lyrical charm of a poem etc help to elevate the mind of man to heights of joy. Keats said, "A thing of beauty is joy for ever". The mother Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry echoed, "Beauty, you are my way to divine". Traditionally several of the fine arts like music and dance have been associated with worship to emphasise the holy connection between art and divinity. The real purpose of art is to bring out the best in man which is the divine principal.

The folk forms have constantly been changing and in folk dances some techniques and rules were added and these took the forms of classical dance like Kathak, Manipuri, Odissi, Bharat Natyam, Kathakali and Kuchipudi.

Initially in India the dance was a way of worship and was therefore, performed in temples. But with the muslim influence, it shifted to courts as the muslim rulers' little understanding of Bhakti Rasa enshrined in dance as a mode of worship.
Guru Nanak composed his teachings in verses which were sung in different Ragas. He had in depth knowledge of the impact of arts on human mind and therefore was a great lover of fine arts. He travelled far and wide for preaching universal brotherhood in the company of Bhai Mardana who used to play Rabab while singing Guru's hymns in various melodies.

Kathak form of dance is a very ancient art of Northern India. Through this medium people used to be educated about various mythological stories and historical events.

In my thesis, I have dwelt upon Punjab folk dance, traditions as these are reflected in Guru Nanak Bani. The scheme of research on the above topic has been chapterised as follows :-

I. Indian Traditions of Dance.

II. Traditions of Folk Dance in Punjab - Origin of Dance and Development.

III. Types of Folk Dances in Punjab.

IV. Guru Nanak's Attitude towards Dance and Social Political Milieu of His Time.

V. Instruments used in Guru Nanak's time.
A detailed bibliography has been included at the end of thesis.