CHAPTER II

TRADITIONS OF FOLK DANCE IN PUNJAB
ORIGIN OF DANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

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PART 'A': MYTHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

2.1.1 CREATION OF NATYA-VEDA:

The origin of Indian dance is associated with number of mythological episodes. It is said that at the end of Golden age and beginning of Silver-age, moral values and ideals and attitudes underwent a change for the worst. People became listless and dissatisfied. They discovered that there was such a thing as boredom. What was the state of people was equally true for gods. Because of perpetual inactivity, gods were in despair. They thought that they must do something to get rid of this boredom. They approached Brahma, the Creator, for help and requested him to devise some amusement to pass time which should be all embracing i.e. it should enchant both the eyes and the ears and should be suitable to all including the low castes.

Brahma distilled the essence from all the four Vedas. From Rig Veda he derived the words, from Sam Veda he extracted the music, from Yajur Veda, the code of gestures and from Atharva Veda, the flavour. He blended these ingredients into a harmonious whole and created the art of theatre and gave it the name of Nritya. The book dealing with this art came to be known as 'Natya-Veda'.

2.1.2 STAGING OF FIRST DRAMA BY BHARATA:

Brahma had simply created a technique and its worth could only be proved by putting it into practice. The
gods, used to leisurely ways, were not willing to shoulder this responsibility. Brahma asked god Indra to teach it to other gods and give a performance in consonance with these principles. Indra replied that gods would neither understand it nor interpret it skillfully. He suggested that sages would be more suited for this task. Brahma then taught this Veda to Bharata and asked him to prepare a drama. Bharata with his 100 sons set himself to work. Brahma directed that graceful style should also be included in the play. This was not possible if the play was to be enacted by males only. Brahma, therefore created twenty three Apsaras to be employed in the play. The drama was staged under Indra's banner before the audience of gods and demons. The story of the drama was the fight between gods and demons in which gods came out victorious. This hurt the feelings of demons.

2.1.3 DEMONS DISPLEASURE:

In the book Indian Dances by Rina Singha and Reginald Massy, the result of hurt feelings of the demons is described as follows :-

"The gods were extremely pleased and rewarded the players with many gifts. However certain demons who had sneaked in, took offence at the dramatization of their defeat and saw to it that the actors lost their memories, power of speech and movements. Indra divined what had happened and taking up the finest banner staff, battered all the demons to death. He then gave this staff, or
Jarjara, to the players for their protection but other demons came and continued to harass the actors until Brahma advised Bharata to build a playhouse. This done, its various parts were protected by different deities. All the actors and actresses too were given patron deities to protect them. Brahma himself protected the middle of the stage and this is why flowers are symbolically scattered on it at the beginning of every performance.

Brahma also tried to reason with the demons and spoke to them saying that they were not the only ones to be shown to disadvantage in drama but that drama would show all manners of people, gods as well as demons, in every condition 'There is no wise maxim, no learning, no art or craft, no device, no action that is not found in the drama'. It would instruct as well as entertain. Every man would find in it some relevance to himself.  

2.1.4 OBJECT OF DANCE AND ART CREATION:

The art of dance and drama was created to instil a virtuous code of conduct and uplift the finer values of life. This fact finds support from Sloka 8-11, Chapter I of the Natya Shastra wherein it is written that Indra and other gods approached Brahma and requested him to give people a toy (Kridaniyaka) which could not only be seen but also heard to provide a diversion so that people gave up their evil ways.  

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 20-21.
2. Introduction to Bharat's Natya Shastra, P 3.
The purpose of the Natya Shastra was the attainment of four purushart or objects of human pursuits namely Dharma (spiritual and ethical development), Artha (acquiring of wealth), Karma (conjugal life and pleasure of environment) and Moksha (Salvation). It is said that after demons were mollified by Brahma the latter suggested to Bharata that it should be performed before Lord Shiva for his guidance. After elaborate preparations, two plays namely Amrita Manthan (Churning of the Ocean) and Tripura Daha (Burning of three Abodes) were staged to be witnessed by Lord Shiva who was mighty pleased with the performance. While congratulating Brahma, Shiva suggested the incorporation of his dance. On Brahma's request Shiva directed his disciple Tandu to teach the dance. Tandu taught Shiva's dance (Tandava) to Bharata. Parvati also instructed him in her style (Lasya). It is also said that Parvati also taught her style to Usha, the daughter of demon Vanasur.

From Tandu, Bharat Muni learnt the basic foundation of dance comprising 108 Karanas, the thirty two Angaharas, the four Rechakas and the various Pindi Bhandas. All this basic dance technique has been described by Bharata in Tandav Lok Shana, the fourth chapter of Natya Shastra.

1. Nritanjali (An Introduction to Hindu Dance), P 34.
2. Indian Dance, P 5.
   Abhinaya Prakasika, P 2.
3. The Dance in India, P 3.
2.1.5 SHIVA'S DANCE:

Nataraja means the king of actors and dancers. In Uttar Pradesh Shiva is known as a Yogi and Philosopher, in Bengal as Destroyer and in South India as Natraja.¹

Shiva dance is known as Tandav. It is said that Lord Shiva performed 108 types of dances but in Saivite literature one finds details of sixty four only, which the Lord performed at 64 different shrines. It is commonly accepted that except seven dances all other dances of Shiva are merely varying interpretations of the basic Tandav. These are (1) Anand Tandav or dance of joy and bliss, (2) Sandhya Tandav is the evening dance, (3) Kaliśka Tandav is the slaying of demons of evil and ignorance, (4) Tripura Tandav is the slaying of demon Tripura. (5) Sanghar Tandav is the dance of destruction. These are solo dances. There are two other dances of Shiva which are not solo but are with his consort Parvati. These are (6) Tandav dance with Gori which is called Gori Tandav and (7) Uma Tandav-dance with Uma.² Six of these Tandavas elaborate the main aspects of Shiva while the Anand Tandav portrays manifold responsibilities of Lord Shiva. For example, in Anand Tandav or the dance of bliss, the hand holding Damaru or rattle drum stands for the creative force the hand shown as flat palm with extended fingers

¹. Art of Indian Dancing P 9.
². Ibid, P 9.
gives assurance of protection to his devotees; the hand holding the fire signifies destruction or fire sacrifice; the foot planted on the subdued dwarf symbolises the removal of ignorance and illusion and stamping down evil that binds the soul; upraised foot signifies emancipation of soul from the cycle of rebirth and that he showers grace on those who seek it, the fourth hand pointing to the raised foot tells the path of salvation, and a beautiful refuge to those who seek His love and grace.\footnote{The Dance in India, P 1, 10 and 12.}

2.1.6 CONSORTS OF SHIVA

The gods have their twin aspects in Hindu mythology. Their active principal or energy being considered feminine and called consort (Shakti). The consorts of Shiva takes many forms and represents many diverse qualities. Well known amongst these names are Sati, Uma, Parvati, Meenakshi, Durga and Kali.\footnote{Sangeet, March 1960. P 98.} According to legend, Sati was the daughter of Daksha, the spiritual son of Brahma. Her father did not invite Shiva to a sacred ceremony. She could not bear the insult and cast herself into the sacrificial fire and perished. When Lord Shiva came to know of it, he appeared on the scene and putting Daksha and other adversaries to plight, picked up Sati in his arms and danced seven times around the world. The movements expressing his grief were so forceful that the whole world trembled. To save the world from the catastrophic results of Shiva's power, Vishnu severed the sati's body into pieces and...
in this way released Shiva from his rage and the gods prayed to Shiva to be calm. Shiva returned to Mount Kailash and became engrossed in deep meditation. Sati was reborn as Uma, the daughter of Himavan (Himalaya). She is also known as Parvati, who again became the consort of Lord Shiva. She danced and sang divinely. According to legend, Uma's meditation and austerities for many ages won her Lord Shiva's admiration and compelled him to accept her as consort. This exemplifies that to achieve the final goal of becoming one with the God, one has to pursue the path of love and devotion, giving up the ego.

2.1.7 SHIVA'S ANAND TANDAV AT TILLAI:

Shiva's most significant dance, Anand Tandav is said to have been performed at Tillai, the ancient name of Chidambaram, to chasten the rishis at Tillai who were teaching the people doctrines. Among those who saw Shiva's dance was Adi Shesha, the thousand hooded serpent, on whom Vishnu reclines. He was so much entranced by the performance that he prayed to Lord Shiva to allow him to see it again. Lord Shiva directed Adi Shesha to remain at Tillai till he visited again. Adi Shesha transformed himself into the shape of half snake and half man and practised austerities for thousands of years in company of Vyaghrapada, a devotee of Lord Shiva, before he saw Lord Shiva dance again. It is said that Adi Shesha, came to be known as Patanjali.

1. The Dance in India, P 10 and 12.
2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 16-17.
2.1.8 SHIVA'S DANCE COMPETITION AT TILLAI:

There is another legend about Lord Shiva's second visit to Tillai. It is said that at that time, there were two shrines, one of Shiva and the other of goddess Kali, his counterpart. Shiva travelled to Tillai to grant benediction to Patanjali and Vyaghrapada, but Kali refused admission. To settle the dispute, Lord Shiva proposed to Kali to compete with him in dance and that the loser would leave the town. Shiva performed many dances which Kali imitated with absolute perfection. He then contrived to defeat her in another way. He raised his foot to the level of his crown and continued to dance in that pose. Feminine modesty of Kali did not permit her to take up that pose and she withdrew from the contest.¹

2.1.9 THREE ASPECTS OF SHIVA'S DANCE:

Shiva represents that aspect of God who creates good (true knowledge) and destroys ignorance. He is the source of cosmic harmony and rhythm. There are three aspects of his dance (1) The destructive (2) The yogic (3) The gift giving.

2.1.10 FIRST ASPECT OF SHIVA'S DANCE:

This is Tandava Tamsic aspect of Bhairava. He dances this awe-inspiring dance on the cremation grounds. He dances as a destroyer and destroys the illusion which binds the soul to the fleeting world. The cremation ground

¹ The Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 16-17. Dance Drama of India and the East, P 4.
is symbolic of hearts made pure by burning away of all illusions, ignorance and deeds, and with the removal of ego, the soul gets liberated. He is the ten armed Lord, denoting great power.¹

2.1.11 SECOND ASPECT OF SHIVA'S DANCE:

This is his divine yogic evening dance performed on Mount Kailash, the hermitage of Shiva. It is described as follows in Shiva Prodosha Stotra: "Placing the mother of three worlds upon the golden throne, studded with precious gems, Shulapani dances on the heights of Kailasha and all the gods gather around him. Saraswati plays on Vina, Indra on the flute, Brahma holds the time marking cymbals, Lakshmi begins a song, Vishnu plays on drum and all the gods stand around.

Gandharvas, Yakshas, Patagas, Gragas, Siddhas, Sadhyas, Vidyadharas, Amaras, Apsaras assemble there to witness the celestial dance and hear the music of divine choir at the hour of twilight.

This is known as Shiva's Sandhya Nritya which is grace-giving dance granting spiritual bliss to those who seek to realize him.²

2.1.12 THIRD ASPECT OF SHIVA'S DANCE

This is a gift giving dance which was performed by Lord Shiva to chasten the Rishis who had faultered and ultimately acknowledged Shiva as their Lord.

1. The Dance in India, P 6.
2. Ibid, P 6
Shiva in this dance, is the dual personality of god and goddess, the gracious entity with powerful nobleness. He is the source of all life and movement with his divine flaming arch that vibrates. He will destroy all evil, freeing the souls of mankind from the illusion that keep him tied to earth.\(^1\)

Mohan Khokar in his book Traditions of Indian Classical Dance interprets the Dance of Shiva as under:

"For one who can perceive deeper, the Anand Tandav attitude of Shiva is fraught with yet more recondite symbolism, as far instance, is seen in explaining the damaru. It suggests vibrations, vital vibrations which constitute the first step in the evolution of universe as also the birth of sound-primal sound on which all music and languages of the universe are based. Some images show Shiva with flying locks of hair studded with stars - the set pattern of rhythm of the cosmos. While two eyes of Shiva represent the two eyes of the world, namely, the sun and the moon, his third eye, in the centre of the forehead, stands for latent fire: together Shiva's three eyes are also taken to indicate the past, present, and future integrated into the infinite span of Time. The serpents adorning various parts of his body suggest the diverse forces he has tamed and harnessed. The wearing of man's ear rings on one side and a woman's on the other implies that he embodies in his form both male and female energies. The Ganga sprouting from his streaming treesses gives affirmation for his deathlessness. And Shiva's dance on the ugly writhing dwarf signifies the complete defeat of evil in

\(^1\) The Dance in India, P. 6.
Interpreted metaphysically, the Dance of Shiva is not a random or an occasional affair; it is an eternal phenomenon. The Dance of Shiva sustains the universe and imparts order and purpose to its activity. The ever-enduring cycle of creation, continuance, and dissolution stems from the Dance of Shiva and survives because of it. Indeed it has been said of the iconographic representation of the Dancing Shiva that this is the clearest image of the activity of God which any art or religion can best boast of. To the discerning Hindu, the Nataraja concept of Shiva truly stands for a whole philosophy of life.¹

Shiva's gift giving dance represents his five activities (Pancakriyta), viz Shristi (over looking creation and evolution), Sthite (preservation), Samhara (destruction, evolution), Tirobhava (veiling, embodiment, illusion and also giving rest), and Anugraha (release, salvation, grace). These separately considered, are the activities of the deities Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheshvra and Sada Shiva.²

2.1.13 KALI'S DANCE:

Shiva's consort Kali is also said to have danced, the most prominent one being Urdhava, which she performed with Shiva by way of competition, to decide who was the better dancer. She is said to be dancing on cremation grounds.

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 18.
2. The Dance of Shiva P 87
The philosophical and religious symbolism about dancing on cremation grounds by Kali has been described lucidly by Sir John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon) in Garland of Letters Madras 1922 and quoted by Enakshi Bhavnani in the book The Dances in India, thus:

"Kali is set in such a scene for she is that aspect of great power which draws all things into Herself at and by dissolution of the universe. He alone worships without fear who has abandoned all worldly desires and seeks reunion with her as the one blissful and perfect experience. On the burning ground all worldly desires are burned away. She is naked and dark like a threatening rain-cloud, for she who is Herself beyond mind and speech reduces all living things into that worldly 'nothingness' which, as the void (Shunya) of all we know, is at the same time the All (Purna) which is Light and Peace. She is naked, being clothed in space alone (Diagambara), because Great Power is unlimited; further She is Herself beyond Maya (Mayatita); that power of Herself with which She covered Her own nature and so creates all universes. She stands upon the corpse like (Shavarupa) body of Shiva. He is white, because He is the illuminating (Prakesha), transcendental aspect of Consciousness. He is inert because the changeless aspect of the Supreme, and She apparently Changing aspect of the same. In truth She and He are one and the
same, being twin aspects of the One who is Changeless, and exists as Change, Clothed in Infinite Space.\(^1\)

2.1.14 VISHNU

In the Hindu Trinity in importance next to Shiva is Vishnu, however he has no importance as a dancer. The only way in which he is associated with dancing is that he witnessed Shiva's dance and played the cymbals when Shiva danced.

2.1.15 KRISHNA

According to Hindu religion Vishnu has come to earth in many incarnations (Avtaras) and the 8th incarnation being Krishna. He was born of royal blood but grew up amongst simple pastoral people of Bindraban in Gokula. He played with Gopas (Cowherds) and Gopis (milkmaids). His boyhood is full of many stories of naughty deeds and playful pranks which he is said to have performed.

Krishna is the man God who loved and delighted in things which make men happy. He danced both alone and with others. Shiva is serious and Krishna is full of pathos and love. Krishna is known as Natwar whereas Shiva is known as Natraja.\(^2\)

1. The Dance in India, P 8.
2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 14.
Though Sri Krishna danced on many occasions the
details of which are found in many ancient books, three
important dance themes will explain the philosophical
truths reflected in them.

2.1.16 KRISHNA'S TANDAV DANCE (KALIYA MARDAN AND KALIA DAMAN):

When Krishna as a boy was living in Gokula with
his foster parents Nanda and Yashoda, the serpent known
as Kalia, a hundred headed monster lived in river Yamuna.
The serpent had became a menace for herdsmen of the village.
One day when Krishna alongwith his gopas was playing
with a ball, it fell in the river, which was abode of
Kaliya. Krishna jumped into the river to retrieve the
ball. Kaliya resented the intrusion and the result
was a fierce combat. Krishna leapt from one head of
the monster to the other and subjudicated him. To
rejoice the victory, Krishna climbed on the hood of
Kaliya and danced. In this dance Krishna symbolised
that aspect of God who destroys evil and protects the
innocent and the right.1

2.1.17 NAYAKA - NAYAKA BHAVA - KRISHNA LILAS:

These are dances in which Radha, the beloved of
Krishna takes part. These dances represent the yearning
of the individual soul to merge with the universal
soul. Prema is lasting Bhakti (devotion) and is a
sure path to achieve this end. Man's heart is the

1. Tradition of Indian Classical Dance, P 18-19
Sri Shuk Sudha Sagar, P 808-812.
place of sacrifice. All his deeds and thoughts are renderings offered as sacrifice. It is a dance of giving up ego and imbibing love and devotion for the God.¹

In Bengal Lord Krishna is always depicted in dancing poses with divine flute in his hand. Bengali devotees of Radha and Krishna went singing to different parts of India and spread the Krishna cult. The Vaishnavas of Bengal make Radha and Krishna dance. They also dance while singing devotional and love songs of Krishna and Radha. Poets like Vidyapati, Chandidas, Jayadeva and Mirabai sang Krishna's unforgettable adulations with ecstasy.²

2.1.18 THE MAHA RAAS OR RAAS LILA OR RAAS MANDALA:

This is the ardent dance of love which Krishna used to perform with Gopis (milkmaids) of Bindraban. Several ancient Sanskrit texts contain references to this mystic sport of Lord Krishna, the most important being found in tenth book of the Bhagavat Purana. In this, Vyasa devotes five chapters on the description of this dance.³

This dance has a deep philosophical meaning. Gopis represent the countless souls in search of over­soul. Their love is not for that which is seen, but for that which is not seen. All their affections are

1. The Dance in India. P 9
3. Sri Shuk-Sudha Sagar, P 872-873.
directed towards the supreme love viz God. Gopies give their all to Him willingly without expectation of any reward. This signifies the manner in which one should love God. The playing of flute and consequent gathering of Gopies symbolises the fact that nothing can stand in the way of those who sincerely love God. The multiplication of Krishna while doing the Raas signifies that God comes to each and every devotee whosoever craves for Him.¹

The great exponent of Vaishnava cult, Shri Chaitanya always conceived Radha and Krishna merged into one in his own heart and himself felt the pleasure and pain which Radha felt due to love and separation of Krishna.²

2.1.19 **DISTINCTION BETWEEN VAISHNAISM AND SHAIVISM:**

A fine distinction can be made between the two cults viz, Vaishnaisam and Shaivism. In Krishna cult the love is brought into prominence and it is regarded as the path of devotion. In it emotion, particularly Shringar Rasa is predominant. In Shaivism there is supremacy of intellect. Shiva represents the supremacy of intellect over the heart and Krishna that of heart over the head. Shiva is adored in the temple but Krishna appears as a Sakha (friend) to his devotees or a lover or a child according to the form of devotion.³

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1. Tradition of Indian Classical Dance, P 20
   The Dance in India, P 9.
   The Shuk-Sudha Sagar, P 855-857.
2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 15.
DANCES OF APSARAS:

Apsaras are the celestial fairies or heavenly nymphs who danced in the court of Indra - the Vedic Lord of heaven. The most famous among them are Menaka and Urveshi. Menaka's reference also comes in "Shankuntla", the drama written by Kalidas, who was sent to disturb the meditation of sage Vishwamitra. In the epic of Mahabharata too, reference is made of Arjuna having learnt the art of dance from the court of Indra and teaching it to Uttra, the daughter of king Virat during his exile incognito.

To sum up, the birth of dance in Hindu mythology is bound with the ever pulsating rhythm of heavens. It is the gods, goddesses and an untold number of other characters in this mythology who continue to be remembered in the dance, that women and men on earth have exulted in as entertainment carrying it to the height of a glorious performing art.¹

1. The Splendours of Indian Dance P 17.
PART B : RELIGIOUS ASPECT

2.2.1 WHAT IS RELIGION ?:

The literal meaning of the latin word religion is to unite with God. According to Oxford dictionary, religion is practice of sacred rites or prevalent system of faith and worship. It is human recognition of super human controlling power, especially of a personal God entitled to obedience. Religion essentially is the means of making man search for the soul or God within him. It has the goal of self realizations which is possible only by inculcating spirituality. Religion is the means and all different rituals and modes of worship are aimed at realizing the divine consciousness in man.

Guru Nanak's religion was the religion of love and service. At Page 790 of S.G.G.S. in Rag Suhi, Baba Nanak says that one who has not known love is like a guest visiting an empty house and departs disappointingly.1

2.2.2 ART AND SPIRITUALITY:

Art is beauty and beauty is art "all Sundaram (beauty) must lead man to Sathyam (truth) and Sathyam to Shivam or bliss (which is auspiciousness itself)" says Sri Satya Sai Baba. 2

1. S.G.G.S, P 790.
2. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 191.
There are 64 Arts (Kalas) of which the more prominent ones are painting, dancing, music, poetry and literature. Art is related to spirituality. Leonardo-de-Vinci said that art of painting is related to God Himself, since painting is the grand daughter of nature.¹

The dance in India with its history of more than three hundred years grew and was nurtured in temples. This has given dance its distinctive religious quality.²

2.2.3 DANCE VIS-A-VIS DIVINITY:

Traditionally several fine arts like classical music and classical dance have been associated with temple worship making a holy connection between art and divinity. Goddess Saraswathi is depicted as holding a Veena in her hand to symbolise the link between music and God. Similarly Lord Shiva is shown in a dancing pose to link the dance with God. The power of music and dance as prayer has been experienced by artists. There are cited incidences in the history of music where the rain was brought about through the power of music. The real purpose of art is to bring out the best in man which is the divine principle. Real art is that art which brings out the Atmatattva or the essence of the soul.

¹. The Glory of Puttaparthi, P 191.
². Creations, P 20.
SPIRITUAL TRENDS IN DANCE AND MUSIC:

In India the spiritual trend in music and dance has all along been present since times immemorial. In the ancient books of Hindus, the Vedas, dance is referred to in Rigveda, Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda and Puranas. It was always performed in rituals and sacred ceremonies. In the ceremonies of horse sacrifices, a ritualistic dance accompanied by sacred songs was performed by young girls.

There is a Vedic pronouncement to the fact that a daughter must be first married to Soma, then to Gandharva and only then to Agni. It means that she should first be taught to brew Soma Rasa, then to dance and sing, and having learnt these arts only then she should be given in marriage.¹

Saintly men in their unbounded love for the God sought liberation (Moksha) and became one with the universal soul through music and dance. The devotional songs were known as Kirtans and then when collectively sung these were called Sankirtan. Sacred hymns were also chanted in various Ragas. Melodies in praise of God were composed and sung to win His grace. The famous ones are of Jayadeva, the Trangas of Narayana Tirtha and the devotional compositions of Meera Bai, Gopal Krishna, Bharti, Tukaram, Tulsidas, Kabir and Baba Guru Nanak.

¹ Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 23.
2.2.5 DEIFYING THE FORCES OF NATURE:

The nature has inspired man to the noblest ideals and caused him to deify and worship its forces. Since the earliest time in the history of man, the Vedas are full of such instances. For example, we find Sun (Mitra), Moon (Soma), fire (Agni), wind (Vayu), Varuna (water and thunder, lightening, and storm (Rudras) are deified into celestial beings. In many poetic hymns of Vedas respectful expressions of worship are made to these wonders of nature. God's hand was taken to be in everything and He became identified with the whole universe.¹

Indian art always keeps in close contact with nature in all her moods. With art and religious thoughts seeking the same end, the Hindu concept of the divine aspects of dance represent many fold activities of God.²

2.2.6 WESTERN, ORIENTAL AND GURU NANAK'S CONCEPT OF CREATION:

Western concept of creation of Universe is different from that of Indian or Oriental. The former's concept of creation of universe is from nothing (shun),³ whereas Indian theory is the arrangement of something already existing. 'Aekoham Bhausyam' - I am one let me be many. It conceives the unfolding of primordial being which has neither a beginning nor an end. Everything owes its origin to Mahashakti, energy and its evolution

¹ The Dance in India, P 1.
² Ibid
³ Holy Bible, P 1
gave birth to sun, moon and other planets. The movement of energy gives birth to rhythm, from movement arises friction giving rise to sound. Therefore, universe is bound by rhythm and sound.

Projesh Banerji in his book Kathak dance through ages writes, "closely connected with the birth of rhythm and sound is the theory of the Pursha (man), Prakriti (nature) and Eternal force of Supreme Energy (Mahashakti) and these three taken as a whole, lead to the theory of origin of Dharma or men's duty towards Nature and Supreme Force.

The concept of Dharma (religion) gives birth to the gods and goddess with their respective attributes developing in the creation of the temples (Architecture) dance and music (art). This is the secret of Indian philosophy of spiritual life.

Dance is the ebullience of the soul, through the upsurge of all those vital energies which by their rhythmic expression of movement interpret the other mind of humanity in its search for grace".1

2.2.7 GURU NANAK ON CREATION:

About the creation of universe Baba Nanak says, "By His command (Hukam), all forms came into being but His Will defies description. By His Will all souls came into being and by His Command they get into

1. Kathak Dance through Ages, P 2.
higher state. By His Command some are high, some low and by His Command pains and pleasures are pre-writ. All are subject to His Will. No one is outside the domain of His Will".\(^1\)

About the origin and nature of universe, Baba Nanak says, "For numerous Yugas there was pitch darkness (Void), in which the creator was settled in trance.\(^2\) For countless Aeons there was darkness. There was neither earth nor skies. There was only the infinite order (will). There was neither night nor day nor sun or moon but only God existed in ceaseless trance. At that time neither forms of creation nor speech nor wind nor water existed. There was no hell or heaven. There was no Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva ....... As it pleased Him, He created the world. He created Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He created continents and other worlds and made Himself manifest". Baba Nanak further says, "From the unattributed void, air and water were created and in a similar way the earth, sky the three worlds and all beings were created by His ordinance.\(^4\)

\(^{1}\) Japji Pauri, P2.
\(^{2}\) S.G.G.S, P 1023.
\(^{3}\) Ibid, P 1035.
\(^{4}\) Ibid, P 1037.
According to Baba Nanak the whole world is His reflection, who is not subject to death or decay, and the Lord is pervasive in each being. This means what is there in the universe is also to be found in the human body.

2 2.8 INDIAN DANCE'S SPIRITUAL POWER:

The dance was considered as the medium of interpretation for religion, creation and human aspirations besides being a source of pleasure. That is the reason why strong emphasis was laid on character of the artist. He was required to shun all agitation and lead a virtuous life. Indian dance is rife with spiritual power. It is said that Shri Chaitanya, a devotee of Lord Krishna would be filled with ecstasy and went about singing beautiful praises of Krishna and in the fullness of ecstasy would be moved into the most graceful dance the world had ever seen. The dance not only attempts to portray the message of God but embodies the inspiration to become one with God.

2.2.9 REFERENCE TO DANCE IN PURANAS:

Next in importance to Vedas are the Puranas in which there are references about the importance of dance for learning other arts and progress in the spiritual field.  

1. S.G.G.S, P 1038.
3. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 24.
2.2.10 QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF A DANCER:

Early authorities of Indian dance had a flare for perfection and therefore they laid down the qualities and qualifications which were essential for a dancer. To quote from Tradition of Indian Classical dance, the following qualifications were necessary for a female dancer: "The female dancer according to acknowledged authorities should have a perfect symmetrical body, a pleasing face, wide-open eyes, red lips, attractive teeth, a neck like spiral conch, arms like sinuous creepers, full rounded breasts, a slender waist, hips that are full, but not too padded and thighs resembling the trunk of an elephant. She should be neither very heavy nor very lean, neither very tall nor very short, and she should be either fair or dark in colour. She should in addition, exude charm and have agility, steadiness, endurance, confidence and a good memory. She should be witty, agreeable and fully devoted to the art. She should have absolute control of movement, step and timing, be endowed with a good voice and be able to dance to the accompaniment of both vocal and instrumental music. She should feel quite at ease when performing and she should know exactly when to begin and when to stop dancing".  

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 60.
2.2.11 INFLUENCE OF DANCE ON OTHER ARTS:

The deep and abiding ideals of philosophy and aesthetics on which the Hindu dance is based influenced other arts like sculptures and paintings. Architecture and sculpture took an important place amongst the Indian arts when Buddhist builders started using stones for constructing their monuments about 272-231 B.C. It was Buddhists who from 2nd century A.D. onwards first used representations of Hindu deities like Shiva, Vishnu, Lakshmi and Indra in their sculptural art. And it was from them that Hindu religious sculptural and architectural arts took their inspiration starting from 6th century A.D. and reaching its peak in 13th century A.D. The temples became not only the centres of religious worship but of arts and learning. To make abstract theological teachings understood by average person symbols were created which explained the inner meanings of these precepts.¹

The ancient Indian sculptures had to study 32 silpa shastras (Rule of Craftmen) and understand Athurva Veda and the mystic vedic prayers (Mantras) by which the deities are invoked. Noble ideals, divine visions were born of their contemplation and imagination and transferred to stone. Thus from very early times, Indian worship of God through an image got established.

¹ The Dance in India, P 14.
The art of dance depicting various aspects of God and their attributes became the subject matter of sculptures which can be seen in temples throughout India. We find dance sculptures at Bharhut, Amaravati, Aurangabad, Ajanta, Ellora, Khandagiri and Udayagiri rock cut cave temples. The Bharhut cave temple belongs to 200 B.C. It is situated half way between Allahabad (U.P.) and Jabalpur (M.P.). Amaravati belongs to 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. wherein dancing Apsaras are depicted. In Ajanta and Ellora dancing Nataraja is sculptured. In Khandagiri and Udagiri (Orissa state), on caves which are placed just before the beginning of Christian era, men and women dancers have been sculptured making offerings to the Jain Shrine. In fact, the dancing apsaras occupy an important place in Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jain sculptural art, indicating the feminine personality’s grace and tender spirits devoid of earthly attachment.¹

The sculptures of Shiva's dance are found in the golden hall at Chidambaram or Tillai, which are said to have been placed in 6th century A.D. In Nataraja temple at Chidambaram there are sculptures of dancing Shiva which portrays creation, preservation and destruction. Similarly, in Brihadeswara temple at Tanjore, Hoysala temple Halebid (Mysore State), Shiva temples at Trichinopoly, Rameshwaram, the Jaganath temple at Puri, the

¹. The Dance in India, P 15-16.
Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneshwar and the Sun temple at Konarak and Shiva temple at Kanchipuram, the sculptures depicting the mystic dances of Shiva can be seen.¹

The dances of Goddess Durga and Kali, twin aspects of Shiva can be seen in the temples of South. In the temple at Belur (Mysore State), Durga is six handed and is shown dancing her dance of destruction of evil whereas in the Devi temple at Chidambaram, she is shown slaying the evil Asura known as Mahisasuramardini. Kali's dance depicting destruction of evil is represented in Hoysala temple at Halebid.²

The sculpture of dances of Saraswati (Goddess of learning and music), of Lord Krishna subduing Kaliya and of Vishnu in guise of Mohini dancing to defeat Asura Bhasmasura are found in the temples of Belur and Halebid built by Hoysala king Bittige in 12th century. These are two of the few places where Goddess Saraswati who is the consort of Brahma, the creator, is shown as dancer. There are innumerable dance sculptures at the temples of Ambarnath (Maharashtra), at Puri and Bhubaneshwar and in the medieval temples of Khajuraho. In the 13th century shrine of Konark there are numerous sculptures showing the dances of Shiva, Parvati, Ganesha, the Apsaras and dancing girls.

¹ The Dance in India, P 16.
² Ibid.
About sculptures depicting the dances by gods and goddess, Enakshi Bhavani observes as follows:-

"In each magnificent work of art, the whole idea underlying each dance has been vividly expressed. Whether it be parable or otherwise, - stories of gods or the graceful dance of apsaras, or depiction of classical dance, these many sculptures come to posterity as repositories of dance in India. The nobility of form, grace and rhythmic flow of these sculptures inspire lover of aesthetics and the arts with a deep sense of admiration. The uplifting philosophical concept they symbolise, impel a feeling of reverence in the beholder, as though their creation was motivated by divine influence. Indeed their appeal is universal, for they are true master pieces in every sense of the term".¹

¹. The Dance in India, P 17-18.
PART C : HISTORICAL ASPECTS

2.3.1 EXISTENCE OF DANCE AND IT'S GROWTH IN SOCIETY:

The dance as an art came into existence with the growth of human society and civilization. The date of polished dance in the history of India is controversial. It is debatable as to which of the countries of the world was the most civilised. But the Indian civilisation is very ancient, if not the oldest.1

The earliest civilisations discovered in the Indian sub-continent are those of Mahenjo Daro (in the Larkhana Distt - Sind Pakistan) and Harappa (the Multan Distt of West Pakistan) in the Indus Valley and are dated at about 6000 B.C. It would appear that dance by that time must have been developed considerably or at least must have played some important role in the society as one of the finds at Mohenjo Daro was a beautiful statuette of a dancing girl. However nothing is known about the dance techniques of this period.2

2.3.2 CONTRIBUTION OF NATYA SHAstra TO DANCE:

Detailed codification of the art of dance is found in Bharat's Natya Shastra. The Natya Shastra examines in detail every aspect of art of drama, acting, dancing and music.

1. Art of Indian Dancing, P 7.
2. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 17.
The date and authorship of Bharata's Natya Shastra are both in dispute. The book has been dated from the second century B.C. to third century A.D. Similarly, there is less certainty about its author. Mohan Kokar dates it as 2nd century A.D.

Rina Singha and R. Massey in their book 'Indian Dances' write, "Bharat, originally meant a dancer - actor so that the title could mean simply, 'A Shastra on drama for the Dancer - Actor.' On the other hand 'Bharata' is also a name and so it is possible that the title means a Shastra on drama by Bharata."  

Another view is that he was a theoretician who compiled the matter gathered from the writings of others. Yet another view is that Bharata is not the name of a person but a word, an acrostic, formed by combining the initial syllables of Bhava, Raga, and Tala, which stand for expression. Musical mode and rhythm respectively constitute the three essential ingredients of the dance art. The most commonly accepted version is that Bharata Muni was an ascetic scholar who composed an exhaustive treatise on theory and practice of art of drama, dance and music and gave it the name Natya Shastra.

He was a practical man, a technocrat, a man of theatre and a producer-cum-director.

1. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 21.
2. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 25.
3. Indian Dances, their History and Growth, P 21.
Vol. 13, No. 2, December 1982,
2.3.3 CONTRIBUTION OF PURANAS AND OTHER TREATISES:

The next important period in the history of India is that of the two epics the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Here too we find ample evidence of the existence of dance as an art, as an activity and as an adjunct to ceremony. We find in Ramayana that Ayodhya had four principal halls and one of them was exclusively meant for dancing women. The birth, wedding and coronation of Rama was marked by great revelry which included performances of dances and music. The king Ravana used to sing and dance in praise of Shiva. He had professional dancers in his court. The monkeys who formed the army of Rama were fond of dancing.¹

In Mahabharata too references to dancing are also found. Arjuna, while in exile incognito took up the assignment of teaching dance and music to Uttra, the daughter of king Virat.² It can, therefore, be concluded that dancing had a very respectable place in those days in the society.

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1. Ramcharita Manas edited by Human, Prasad, Poddar (Hindi), P 203-204.
   Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 23-24
   Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itihas, P 89,

Next to Vedas, Ramayana and Mahabharata, the sacred books of Hindus are Puranas. There are 18 major Puranas and it is said that their compilation commenced in 1000 years B.C. and concluded in 10th century A.D.

Dance was a well developed and respected art in the times of early Puranas. In Vishnu Dharmotra Purana, it is written that to be a good sculptor or carver it is essential to be a good painter and have mastery of dancing. It is also written therein that one who worships God through dancing is assured of liberation. In Shiva Purana it is written that the temple of Shiva should have beautiful girls who should be proficient in the art of singing and dancing. The Devi Bhagavata Purana also prescribes the adoration of Devi by the performance of music and dance amongst other rituals. The Brahamavaivarta, the Skands and the Bhagavata Puranas also make mention of dancing. Bhagavata Purana gives a detailed description of Krishna's dances, the Raas Lila. In the Agni Purana which is said to have been written about 9th century A.D, there is a separate section dealing with the use of the body and limbs in dancing and acting.¹

In the course of time other technical treatises such as Nandi Keshwara, Abhinaya Darpan, Dhananjaya's Dasa Rupka and Sangeet Ratnakar by Sharang Dev were written.²

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 22-23
2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 8.
2.3.4 DANCE IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE FROM 1st TO 5th CENTURY:

First century to 5th century occupies an important place in the history of Indian classical literature. It was during this period that the four of the earliest greatest poets and play writers made immortal contributions. These were Asvaghosa, Bhasa, Kalidasa and Sundraka.

Asvaghosa who lived in about first or 2nd century A.D. was the first author of Kavya literature. He was a Buddhist philosopher. He propagated the message of Buddha through three principal plays namely Buddha Charita, Saundra Nanda and Sariputra Prakarama. Though he has not dealt with the dance directly, yet has acknowledged its power of charm. In Buddha Charita, he has written the story relating to daughter of Mara (the God of Evil) attempting to seduce Gautam through dancing etc.

Bhasa, who lived in the 2nd and 3rd century A.D. wrote 123 plays. In two of his plays namely Bala Charit and Pancharatra, he describes Halisaka dance. This dance was performed by boys and girls to the accompaniment of singing on occasions of King's birthday or festivals, like Indra Yazna and Bhanuramba. From the writings of Bhasa it can be inferred that the women of respectable families used to receive training in dance and this art was held in high esteem and given a respectful place in society.1

Kalidasa, a well known poet and playwright is famous throughout the world. He is even termed as Shakespear of India. Dance was very dear to him. Mohan Khokar in his book Traditions of Indian Classical Dance writes about him as follows:

"Kalidasa extols dancing as the embodiment of all the moods of man and likens it to a sacrificial feast pleasing to the eyes of Gods. Kalidasa knows what physical attributes go to make the ideal dancer and he spells these out in describing the heroine in Malavikagnimitram. How a dancer should perform - her deportment, her sense of timing, her involvement with the rendering, her communication with the beholder - these and several other nuances of the art does Kalidasa delineate in revealing details. His knowledge of the dance is not that of a mere spectator but of a seasoned aesthetic. And it is perhaps because of this that we find him coolly plant dance terms as suits his fancy during the course of his work.

We learn from Kalidasa that dancing was highly favoured and patronised by royalty. It was commonly practised by princesses, and palaces were often provided with special chambers for lessons in dancing. Women of richer classes pursued the art avidly, and courtesans danced to entertain the people. Teachers
were mostly males, and the system of imparting instruction was through personal tuition and not through schools or academies". ¹

In Meghaduta of Kalidasa, there is a reference to the temple of Mahakala which had dancing girls who danced before the deity every evening.²

2.3.5 SUDRAKA, OTHER AUTHORITIES AND DARVIDIANS:

Sudraka wrote the play Mricchakatika. The principal character Vasantsena in this play is by profession, a dancer. Panini who lived between 700 and 600 B.C, compiled the earliest manual of Sanskrit Grammer (Ashtadhayi), while commenting on the root Nritt - to dance, he refers to Silalin and Krisasava who are said to be authors of certain essentials and fundamental conditions of the dance Chanakya, an astute minister of Ashoka's predecessor Chandragupta, who lived about 4th century B.C, in his book Arthashastra (State craft) has mentioned about dancing, acting, singing etc, which were then under the state control which maintained professionals. Patanjali, who lived in the 2nd century B.C. also wrote a grammer Mahabhashya in which he has made references to two plays Kamsavadha and Balidandha which used to be performed with mime in the manner of dancing. Similarly Vatsyayana who

¹. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 26.
lived in 3rd century A.D. and wrote Kamasutra has given a list of 64 arts in which music and dance rank high are considered to be essential to make a man complete.  

Darvidians, the original inhabitants of India, were fond of various arts, including dancing, is proved by the excavations of pre-Aryan sites. With the aryанизation of India, dance continued to play an important part in the lives of these people particularly as it was closely related to religion.  

2.3.6 PURPOSE OF DANCE: 

Dance was used for pleasing the Gods in temples. The dance performed in temples had religious sentiments and was spiritual. Devdasis were attached to temples for this purpose. References are made in the inscriptions of Raja and other Chola kings in Tanjore Distt in the 11th century, of theatres and dancer in shrines. From the temple of Jaganath at Puri and in almost all the principal temples of South India, Devadasis were engaged for dancing.

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 27.  
2. Indian Dance, their History and Growth, P 33.  
3. Art of Indian Dancing, P 18-19.
In Tamil literature of Sangam age which lasted from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D, we find mention of various types of dances which are performed at different occasions. For example Velanveriyatal was performed in honour of Murugan; Vallikoothu dance was dedicated to Valli, the counterpart of Murugan; Kala-nilai Koothu was performed by soldiers on their return to celebrate the victory. Kings and noblemen kept dancing girls in their regular employment. It is said that when the Chera king Senkuttuvan went on a military expedition to North, he had with him over one hundred dancing girls.¹

In the Buddhist literature and that of Jains there are references of dancing in early times. The life story of Buddha itself provides an example thereof. The parents of Gautam Buddha provided him dancing girls and singers with a view to diverting his attention from spiritual leanings, fearing this may lead to detachment from worldly things.² When Buddha died, the Mulas, a clan of people offered reverence to his earthly remains with dance and music. In the days of Buddha, Amarpali was a famous dancer with whom he had taken food and later she turned a Buddhist nun. Chulavagga is a book which describes

¹ Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 28.
² 2500 Years of Buddhism P 22.
the life of Buddhist monks. It is mentioned therein that their recreation inter-alia included dancing with women. In the Buddhist text Milinad Panha (questions of Milinda) which describes the discussions that King Milinda had with Nagasena, it is mentioned that the inhabitants of the royal city of Saklaa, in Punjab, included musicians, dancers and actors.  

The early literature of the Jains compiled between 4th century B.C. and 5th century A.D. indicate that dancing was prevalent in those days. There were several types of courtesans which also included accomplished dancers and were known as Nattiyao. In the Jains scripture Naya dhamma Kaha, there is reference to Champa, a courtesan who was proficient in singing and dancing. His charges were one thousand coins per performance and he had a privileged status in the society and was authorised to carry Royal umbrella. In the Uttaradhyana, it is written that Uddyana King of Sindhu used to play Veena on which his wife Prabhavati used to dance. Jain texts lists 72 types of arts grouped under 13 heads, one of which includes dancing, singing, instrumental music and druming. In the Raya Paseniya which is a work in

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 29.
Basic Tenets of Buddhism, P 26.
the form of dialogue between king Paesi and Keshkumara, a monk, describes 32 kinds of dance and dance-drama with names unknown to classic Sanskrit literature in the field of this art.¹

A legend says that the Jain Buddhists had come to terms with God regarding the introduction of dancing girls into their austere religion. The pillars of temple Sittanavasi are adorned with figures of dancing girls.²

In the 7th century A.D. Harsha Vardhana, the king of Kanauj, commonly known as Harsha, wrote three plays Ratnavali, Nagananda and Priyadarshika in which references of dancing are found. So much so that in Priyadarshika it is written that dancing and singing are accomplishments which every noble woman should have. Bana, a courtesan of Harsha wrote two prose works namely Kadambari and Harshacharita. The former is love story and copious references are made therein about dances. Harshacharita deals with the life and deeds of Harsha. It is mentioned therein that Harsha's birth was celebrated with great gaiety and dancing girls gave their performances. It is also mentioned therein that Harsha's sister Rajyashree used to take lessons in dancing and singing from the very childhood.³

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 30.
2. Art of Indian Dancing, P 19.
3 Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 33.
2.3.7 PATRONAGE BY KASHMIR RULERS AND SLAVE DYNASTY:

In 1149 A.D. Kalhana, a poet and historian of Kashmir, wrote *Raja Tarangiri*, a work on rulers of Kashmir. In this he cites numerous examples of dancing girls and their royal patrons. Damodar Gupta, a Kashmir poet who lived in the early 9th century and was attached to the court of King Jayapida of Kashmir, wrote *Kuttanimala* which deals with the lives and intrigues of courtesans. King Jayapida married twice and one of his wives was Kamala, a dancing girl. In the first half of the 10th century, Chakravarman, king of Kashmir, married a dancing girl named Humsi and made her principal queen. King Ananta of Kashmir married Sahaja, a devadasi, and when in 1089 A.D. he committed suicide, Sahaja became Sati by entering the funeral pyre. From 1089 to 1101 Harshadeva ruled over Kashmir and he had great passion for the art of dance. Thakkana, one of his favourite dancing girls, brought about his downfall by conspiring with his rivals to dethrone him. Uchhala, who succeeded Harshadeva, married Jaymati, a dancing girl of repute.

During the slave dynasty which was founded in 1206 A.D. by Kutb-ud-Din, there was a society of which musicians and dancing girls were the members. They used to give performances in the palaces of

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 34-35.
princes. During the period of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, who ascended the throne of Kashmir in 1422 A.D., and Sultan Hassan Shah who ruled Kashmir from 1472 to 1484 A.D., dancing was a common feature. It is said that Sultan Hassan Shah had about 1200 musicians in his service.¹

2.3.8 EARLY CENTURIES IN SOUTH AND MARATHA RULE:

In the south in the early centuries of Christian era, Chola, Pallavas, Chera and Pandya Kingdoms too had poets and dancing was prevalent.²

Marathas who were in power from 1674 to 1885 A.D. exhibited intense love and interest in the art of music and dance.³

2.3.9 IMPACT OF DANCE ON OTHER ARTS:

It can be said with great emphasis that Indian dance had a great impact on all other arts of India like sculpture, painting and literature. India's pre-history and pro-history also provide sufficient evidence to this effect.

Dance, as a social activity and a profession has been inseparably connected with the life cycle including religious rites in India. It can be said

1. Traditions of Indian Classical Dance, P 36.
2. Ibid, P 34-35.
that Indian dance tradition is not merely an art nor is it merely a spontaneous expression of joy or harmony with nature; it is an expression of philosophy of India.

2.3 10 **MAIN CATEGORIES OF DANCE FORMS:**

The main categories into which dance forms can be divided are Nritta, comprising hand and foot movements which do not signify any specific theme and Nritya which is danced in the form of gestures-language, depicting distinct ideas or themes. Again, according to quality or kind it is distinguished as Tandav (masculine and vigorous) and Lasya (feminine, graceful and tender). All schools of classical dance have these forms. Different regions have however developed their own styles by incorporating movements from folk or tribal dances which are more earthly and close to soil. All Indian dances require a high degree of perfection and co-ordination of hand, foot and body movement. They are performed bare footed and generally with anklets and vary according to style. The accompanying percussion instrument, the very essence of dance also varies according to the style of dance and is absolutely essential.¹


Dance Drama of India and the East, P 8.
Medieval temples provide ample evidence that sculptors had complete knowledge of the Art of dance. The medieval period is not restricted to sculptures in temples alone. There are sizable volumes of creative writings which prove that dance was widely practised and adored. Sarangadeva in Sangeeta Ratanakara which is a treatise on music allotted a separate exhaustive chapter on dance. By and large, the writer follows the Natya shastra and occasionally Abhinaya Darpana. However, his work provides evidence to the fact that while the traditions in Natya Shastra were generally followed but there were departures and modifications therefrom. For example, he categorises basic movements under two heads namely pure (Suddha) and regional variants (desastha). Again he makes a mention of purely classical form under the head of Sudha and regional variants under the head of Desi Paddhatis. In fact Sarangadeva was not the first to introduce this concept. Bhoja in his Srinagara - Prakasa and Somesvara in Manasollasa had already written these concepts and had accepted regional styles and this contributed greatly to further development of distinctive classical styles of dance.
2.3.11 **NANAK'S CONCEPT OF DANCE GURUS:**

The dance Gurus based their teachings on the treatise but it was passed down to their disciples orally. In this connection Rina Singha and R Massey in their book *Indian Dances* have written as follows:-

"The Dance Gurus based their teachings on this treatise but it was handed down to their chelas (disciples) practically by word of mouth. In any case, they reserved the most precious secrets of their art for selected chelas only, who in their turn, guarded them carefully so that it was extremely difficult for outsiders to make a study of the subject. European Sanskritists knew of the Natya Shastra from references to it in other books but it was believed that all manuscripts had been lost. It was only in the later half of the last century that, while working on a medieval work on drama, Hall, came on a manuscript of the Natya Shastra. This led to others being discovered and much work was done by German Heyman and by the Frenchmen Regnand, Groosset and Levi". ¹

Baba Nanak has emphasised the necessity of a Guru/Master for the aspirant in the spiritual field. Under his guidance he can imbibe firm devotion for

¹. *Indian Dances, their History and Growth*, P 21-22.
the Lord and achieve salvation. The excerpts from Guru Nanak's hymns also tell how can the Guru help the disciple.

(i) There is no distinction between the divinity - inspired Guru and God.¹

(ii) The Lord and the Master is one image. Without the guidance of the holy preceptor the illusion is not shed and the unknowable can not be attained. By listening to the Guru's words supreme joy is attained. By the holy preceptor realization is granted and by His guidance the supreme being is beheld in all.²

(iii) By the guidance of the master a devotee blooms spontaneously and acts in firm devotion. It is by his guidance that one attains union with God and attains the devotion in Nam.³

(iv) By contact with the holy preceptor the darkness is lifted.⁴

(v) By masters guidance, enlightenment is achieved and mind is fixed in meditation and faith, and divine reality is realized. It is by his guidance that holy Divine Nam

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2. Ibid, P 1043.
3. Ibid, P 1174.
4. Ibid, P 877.
is attained.\(^1\)

(vi) By contact with the holy preceptor Divine Grace comes. Without his guidance holy Nam is not attained. It is by contact with the Guru, the fear of God abides in the mind.\(^2\)

(vii) The master is the image of gods, image of the Lord unknowable and unpenetrable mystery. Illumination about the three worlds comes by service to the master.\(^3\)

(viii) Without accepting the Master's words, the mind does not find poise.\(^4\)

(ix) Without contact with the holy preceptor all go about swollen with pride. The holy word of the master is the ship with the help of which one swims across the ocean of existence. By one glance perfectly endowed, preceptor confers liberation. One who has faith in the master, his mind shall attain poise. By his holy glance single minded devotion is attained that brings liberation.\(^5\)

2. Ibid, P 635.
3. Ibid, P 1125.
4. Ibid, P 415.
5. Ibid, P 413.
(x) By service to the holy preceptor your eyes behold the Lord and by realization of his words the sorrow is eliminated.¹

(xi) The master's word is the holy music (Nad) and divine knowledge (vedas) by means of which mind is absorbed in the Lord and it is by the union with the Master, the Lord grants liberation.²

(xii) About studying of Shastras, Simrities and Puranas, Baba Nanak has said that by studying these books men make controversial expositions not realizing the essence. Without the guidance of perfectly endowed master the essence is not found.³

(xiii) Baba Guru Nanak about the preceptor posed the following questions:

   How can without the Master's guidance liberation be attained?

   How can without the Master's guidance one meditate on the Divine Nam? He gives the answer to these in the same hymn saying,

   "Adopt the teachings of the Master and swim across the impassable ocean of the world."⁴

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¹ S.G.G.S., P 416.
² Ibid, P 879.
³ Ibid, P 1032.
⁴ Ibid, P 1041.
2.3.12 EFFECT OF SHIFT IN RELIGIOUS EMPHASIS:

The shift in religious emphasis influenced regional literary traditions which had an impact on the themes of dance. Prior to 11th-12th century, the traditions had been saivite. Thereafter with the appearance of Geet Govinda, the religious impulses were directed towards the worship of Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, giving rise to the cult of Vaishnavism and the dances had the themes of Krishna's exploits which also gave unity to dance styles.

The British system of education did not recognise arts as subject, with the result that the generation of the 19th century was isolated from the art traditions of the country. However, the devotees of the art continued to practice it in their homes. The art virtually died by the 20th century and what could be seen of it was a degenerated form known as Nautch in North and Sadir in South.

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2. Indian Classical Dance, P 4.
3. Ibid.,
After the independence, the interest in dance revived as a national heritage and during the last five decades many layers of past artistic glory have been uncovered.

I have discussed the theoretical aspect of origin of dance in order to give an insight into the background of the traditions of folk dances.