CHAPTER - III

DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUE AND FORMAT OF SADIR

The integral beauty of Sadir, presently known as Bharatanatyam can be better understood and appreciated, if one attempts to analyse its component parts- Nrtta(pure or abstract dance), Nrtya (representational dance), Abhinaya (expressive dance) which as individual entities and in creative fusion with one another have resulted in establishing a fine inimitable style of its own.

The researcher, in the present chapter, proposes to deal with the following aspects which highlight the technique and format of Sadir-

(1) Technique - Drawing a comparison of the adavu system as mentioned in Saṅgīta Saramṛta of King Tulaja-i with the current practising tradition of Bharatanatyam.

(2) Analytical study of the Nirupana format.

(3) The format of Sadir systematised by Tanjore Quartette.

(4) A comparative study of the Nirupana and the present day format of Bharatanatyam.

I. The technique of Nṛtta for any classical dance rests on the sturdy base of the adavus. An Adavu is defined as "the basic rhythmic unit of dance within a specific tempo and time structure that involves composite movements pertaining to Nṛtta\(^{(1)}\)."

We find the reference of the term ‘adavu’ mentioned in the Tamil classic ‘kūṭṭanūl’\(^{(2)}\) and in the medieval work ‘Bharatasaṅgīpatisya’\(^{(3)}\) too.

---


(3) Ibid
We do not find the mention of the term ‘adavu’ in the Nāṭya Sastra of sage Bharata. But the work defines the combined "simultaneous movements of hands and feet while dancing as Karanas" (1).

Hasta pada samāyogāhā
Nṛtyasya karaṇaṁ bhave

The Karanas according to Nāṭya sastra are 108 in number and are evolved out of the combination of the three elements-Sthanas (specific posture); Cāris (the cumulative movement of the feet, shanks, thighs and hips) and Nṛttahastas (Hand gestures employed in pure dance). But it would be interesting to note that all these three elements mentioned above are incorporated in the execution of an adavu too.

A śloka from Saṅgīta muktavali states that these karaṇas are called as 'atu' by the artists of Andhra region and other provinces who are experts in the triple arts of vocal music, Instrumental music and dancing.

Etani Karananyahu 'atu' sabdena loukikah!
Nata āndhrādides'asthāḥ touryattrāvikacaksanāḥ!! (2).

Yet, there seems to be slight differences between the adavu system current in the present practising tradition of Bharatanatyam and the karaṇas mentioned in the sastra.* Unlike the other treatises on dance, the dance chapter - ‘NṛttapraKaranaṁ’ of Saṅgīta Śārāṁṛta(2), an 18th century

(1) A board of Scholars - Translation into English - The Nāṭyasāstra of Bharata Muni "Sri Satguru Publications.Delhi. P.34
(2) Cf. Dr. V.Raehavan - Bharatnāyana. The Journal of the Music Academy, Madras. Vol.XLV. P.251. This sloka is not found in the Saṅgīta Muktavali edited and published in 1991 by The Sarasvati Mahal Library. Thanjavur.
(3) Pandit S.Subrahmanyā Sāstrī - The Saṅgīta Śārāṁṛta of King Tulaja of Tumore: The Music Academy Publication - Madras. 1942.

treatise on the science of music authored by the Maratha King Tulaja-I, has a separate section apportioned called ‘Sramavidhi’ which deals with the practice of the adavus which is more or less similar to the oral tradition of the Sadir -Bharatanatyam dance. This valuable section also gives "the Sanskrit names with their Tamil and Telugu equivalents’ notably of the varieties of foot-beats”(1) referred to in Sanskrit as ‘Pādakuttanam’ which is popularly known as 'adavu' in the practising tradition of the art. In this direction, it is to be noted that most of the technical terms involved in the present oral tradition of the art form are of South Indian in origin.

The adavu system followed by the oral tradition of Sadir - Bharatanatyam has nearly 13-15 adavu groups with each group having minimum of 4-6 variants, all performed at three speeds, the second speed and the third speed doubling and quadrupling the first speed respectively. It is learnt that the adavus as practiced today have been systematised by Tanjore Quartette during the period of King Serfoji-II(2). Some schools practice only 13 adavus, while others identify 15 such groups.

Except for the change in the nomenclature of the adavu groups from school to school most of the adavus and their prescribed variants remain almost same with regard to its performance details.

The names of some of the adavu groups popular in usage are as follows:

1. Tattadavu
2. Nāttadavu
3. Pakkadavu
4. Kuttadavu or Ettadavu
5. Kudiccu mettadavu
6. Sarukkal adavu
7. Suttral adavu
8. Tirmānam adavu
9. Periyadavu
10. Tattimettadavu
11. Mandi adavu
12. Veeşi adavu
13. Simiradavu
14. Meyadavu
15. Paiccal adavu

(1) Dr. V.Raghavan - Introduction - Saṅgīta Śrāṇrata of King Tulaja. The Music Academy Publication - Madras - P XXIII.
(2) Interview with Śrī.K.P.Kitappa pillai on 28-4-94, Thanjavur.
The different groups of adavus are identified by the practitioners of the art basing on two aspects:-

1. The execution of **adavus** performed to the Sollukattu or rhythmic mnemonics such as 'Tattaitaha', 'Dhititai' and so on.

2. The second one deals with the manner of execution of the adavus with regard to its functional or operational point of view, i.e., according to the type of body and foot movements and floor-contacts employed in covering the space either diagonally, sideways, backwards, through whirling, sliding or **aerial** movements. For example -

   (1) **The pakkadavu**: The term ‘pakka’ meaning side involves the movement of the body either sideways or diagonally towards the corners.

   (2) **Suttral Adavu**: The Tamil word ‘Suttral’ means circular or to swirl. The body in this adavu swirls round with the help of one foot while the other rests on the ground, balancing the body.

   (3) **Mevadavu**: The term ‘mey’ in Tamil refers to body and this adavu involves the graceful movements of the major and minor limbs of the body. Meyadavus are usually employed at the preliminary section of the dance numbers such as Jatisvaram and **Tillānā**.

   (4) **Paiccal adavu**: The term ‘pāiccal’ in Tamil means leaping. This adavu involves leaping movements of the body, covering space either to the sides or front with horizontal or through vertical jumps.

Maintaining the basic motif of the **adavu** group, elaborations or variations in movements are created which are performed to the recitation of specific rhythmic mnemonic syllables assigned to the adavu group. Most of the adavus are executed symmetrically in a balanced juxtaposition of the movements to the right and left.
All these categories are once again subjected to multiple rhythmic patterns conceived through various permutations and combinations of hand and foot movements, thus supplementing the pure dance (Nrtta) of Bharatanatyam with amazing variety of simple to complex rhythmic dance sequences called 'Jatis'.

Interestingly, except a few, majority of the adavus are performed in the Ardha mandali position - the basic stance of this art form in which the torso is held erect with the legs bent at the knees and feet are flexed sideways, horizontally in a line with a distance of one span between the heels. This basic stance in Tamil is referred to as Araimandi, literally meaning the half-sitting posture. Obviously this basic stance is quite familiar and common to many other classical dance styles of India.

In order to analyse the Siksarambha (initial training) and the ‘Srama Vidhi’ or the method of practising of the different adavu groups mentioned in the treatise 'Sangita Saramrta', a comparative study of correlating the present practising tradition of the adavus with its textual interpretation would assume greater significance. In this context, it would be imperative to familiarise with different positions of the feet and hand gestures involved in the execution of adavus.

The definitions of some of the feet positions are as follows:-

1. **Sama**: The foot which rests on the ground naturally is called **Sama**. When stationery, it shows the natural state; when moving it indicates moving around.

2. **Ançita**: When the heels are on the ground the balls of the feet raised upwards and the toes outstretched, is **Ançita**.
(3) **Kuncita**: When the toes are bent, the heels raised and the arch bent pose is Kuncita.

(4) **Agratala Samcara**: When the heel is raised up, the big toe stretched, and the other toe curved down, the foot is called Agratala Samcara.

(5) **Udghattita**: Standing on the balls of the feet and bringing the heel down to the ground, once or more is Udghattita.

(6) **Mardita**: That pose is Mardita, in which the sole rubs against the ground crosswise.

Some of the hand gestures employed in the adavus:

(1) **Pataka**: When the thumb is bent, touching the root of the forefinger, the palm and the fingers are outstretched, the fingers pressed against one another, it is Patāka.

(2) **Tripataka**: From Patakahasta, if the ring finger is bent, it is Tripataka.

(3) **Sikhara**: When the finger-tips rest completely in the middle of the palm, and only the thumb points upwards it becomes Sikhara.

(4) **Khatakāmukha**: When the tip of the thumb, forefinger and middle finger are in contact with each other and the ring finger and the little finger are stretched, the hasta is Khatakamukha.

(5) **Alapadma**: When the fingers stand sidewise along the palm, it is Alapadma.

(6) **Mrgasīrṣa**: When the fore finger, middle and ring finger are stretched and bent from the pataka position, the hasta is called mrgasīrṣahasta.

(7) **Dola**: When pataka hands hang freely so as to reach the thighs, it is Dola-Hasta.

These definitions of feet positions are based on the treatise - Saṅgitarātākara.
According to Sangita Saramrta, the method adopted for learning these adavus, begins in the **Araimandi** position with the student holding the centre of a rod or **dandika**, placed horizontally at the chest level supported by two vertical poles in front of the dancer. This practice of holding dandika is referred to in Sanskrit as Dandika Grahana. **Sāmu** in Telugu connotes the exercise with the stick and its Tamil equivalence is Salambam or **Salambam** Pidithal, meaning holding the rod. As this tradition was in vogue during the Maratha period, it would be worthwhile to revive it in its old form, to ensure the balancing of the body with correct posturing and perfection of the basic stance **Ardhamandalai**, for the beginners.

The following is the description of the various adavu groups mentioned in the treatise "Sangita Saramrta" along with its corresponding adavu group practised in the oral tradition.

1. **Samakuttanam - Tattadavu**

   Suddhamandalamasthaya Theyyatheyyeti ṗaṭakaḥ
   Padabhyam kuttanam bhūmou bhavet Tattadavahvayam||
   Bhavettat Samakuttanam |
   **Sollu** - Theyyathai

Adopting Suddhamandala* position and striking the ground with Samapada (on its sole) to the accompaniment of the rhythmic mnemonics "Theyyathai" is called Tattadavu or Samakuttanam. Such a sequential stamping is to be repeated by increasing the speed i.e., in all the three speeds **Vilambita** (slow), Madhya (medium) and Druta (fast).

*The description of Suddhamandala given by Tulaja in the same chapter, more or less corresponds to the half sitting posture with the knees bent and the hand placed on the waist and looking straight in one line (Samadrśi)
Tattadavu :- The term 'tatta' means to strike or hit. In this adavu with the body positioned in the Ardhamandali or Araidandi stance, the feet are made to stamp on the floor with the sole alternately, starting with the right foot first. This process is to be repeated in three speeds set to rhythmic time structure. The s'ollu used is Theyya thai. Hence this "Tatta adavu" conforms with the textual interpretation of Samakuttanam.

2. Khanatpada kuttanam - Kuttadavu

Nikhāya Parsnimekaikam Prthakpādaṇa tādanam
Sapataka karāṇvitam syat Khanat Pādakuttanam (kuttadavu).

Holding patakahasta in both the hands the heel of one foot is placed on the ground with the balls of the foot raised upwards as in Ancita pada; the other foot in Sama pada is made to strike the ground with its sole. This is referred to as Khanatpada kuttanam or Kuttadavu. The Sollu for this adavu has not been mentioned in the treatise. The term Khutta*, in Bharatārnavam of Nandikesvara is defined as the 'stamping of the ground with the forefoot (1). The description of this adavu does not coincide with the Kuttadavu of the practising tradition on the other hand it seems to be part of the next ensuing category of adavu called Nattadavu.

The terms 'Kutta and Etta' means striking and stretching respectively. As per the practising tradition, this adavu rightly involves the beautiful hand extensions(Etta) pointing(Kutta) either horizontally towards sides or diagonally towards the corners. This adavu is performed in the Ardhamandali posture, wherein the feet in Sama position are made to stamp the ground alternately with its sole and with a slight jump on

* The term Khutta, according to Saṅgīta ratriakara has been defined as striking the ground with the tip of the foot. Kuttadavu is identified as Etta by some schools.

the toes, the weight of the body is balanced on the toes of both the feet and the right foot from Agratāla position, is made to strike the ground with its sole in Samapada. This sequence is next repeated, starting with the left foot. This adavu is performed to the mnemonics Thattai taha dhittai taha. There are nearly 6-8 variations in this category and the hand gesture employed for these variations is usually tripatakahasta. The rhythmic variations of this adavu can mostly be seen in the simple as well as complicated dance numbers of Bharatanatyam i.e., in Alarippu as well as in the Vārnam.

Hence the description of the Khanatpadakuttanam as given in the treatise does not coincide with the kuttadavu of the practising tradition, rather it seems to be a part of the next ensuing adavu called “Nāttitattadavu”.

3. ParsVakuttanam; Pascatkurtanam - Nāttitattadavu

Niksipyā Parsnipādhbhyaṁ tripatakakaranvitam|
Tadanam bhuvi yattat syat Nāttitattadavāhvayam ||
ParsVakuttanam Samjnakam ||
Kriyateyadi tatpaścādūdhā—

Kuttanam lakṣya tattvajñaih
Pas'cātkuttanamirītam || Poragha(?) Nattitattadavu ||
Purataḥ Parsvataḥ Pas'cāt Pādakuttana bhedataḥ |
Tatravantara bhedassyuh kara vyāpāra samyutāh ||
Sollu - Thai ta thaiyyā

When the foot is thrust sideways, striking the ground with the heel as in Aṅcita, employing Tripatākahasta, the adavu is known as ParsVakuttanam. It is called as Pascatkuttanam by scholars, when the (kuncita) foot is made to strike the ground backwards. Both the adavu variations are referred to as Natti tattadavu. The sollu used is “Thaita thaiyya”. There
can be as many variations of this adavu category based on variety of foot strokes, either forward, sideways and backwards, accompanied by different movements of the hands.

This adavu according to practising tradition is known as Nattadavu. The term Nattu means stretch and implant. From the basic stance-Araimandi, if the right leg with Ancita foot is extended either sideways or forward to strike the floor with its heel as in Ghattita and then bringing it back to its original position by stamping the floor with its sole on samapada is called Nattadavu and the same movement, is to be repeated with the left foot too.

The Sollu used in practising tradition is "Thai Yum tat tat thai vum tāhā".

Likewise, the manifold ways of leg extensions either towards front, sideways and backwards will result in as many variations of Nattadavu. In total, there are eight such variations which are generally practised under this category.

Except for the slight change in the rhythmic mnemonics, the adavu complies with the description mentioned in the treatise.

4. **Pādāparśvakuttanam-Dhitithai adavu.**

   Kuttanam Pādāparśvābhyaṁ dhitithai śabdapūrvakam |
   Sacakravartanam Pādāparśva Kuttanamirītam
   Tatsyat Dhitithai Kuttanāhvayam ||
   Atra Padapracara tnpataka kara Karmatah ||
   Utpadhyante——————bhedā lakṣyajna sammatah ||
   Sollu - Dhi ti thai

The process in which the side(Pārśva) of the foot is made to strike the ground to the accompaniment of the rhythmic sounding of the mnemonic
"dhitithai" and when repeated with the other foot alternately in quick succession, the adavu is called as Pada Pārśva Kuttanam or Dhitithai adavu. The hands employing Tripatākahasta, with different movements of the feet, many variations of this adavu group can be created. Such variations have been recognised and approved by scholars in the field of dancing.

This adavu in the present day practice is performed in the Araimandi position by placing the right foot in the Ancita position either sideways or towards front while the left foot which is in its natural or Sama position (squat obliquely) is made to strike the ground on its sole following which the right foot (Ancita) is brought back to the original position. This adavu is used generally in the concluding portion of the dance sequences called ‘Tirmanam’ performed, to the Sollukattu - ‘Thadiginatom’ or Kitatakatarikatatom by using Tripataka hasta or combination of Pataka - Khatakāmukha - Alapadmahastas respectively.

This adavu is in close conformity with the textual interpretation except for slight modification with regard to the placement of the foot which is to be placed on its heel(parsni), unlike on its sides(parsva) as mentioned in the treatise.

5. Digidigikuttanam - Digidi adavu - Koyvaradavu

Sthitvardhamandale bhūmou pāḍāgracalanātmakam
Sacakrāvantanam Proktam digidigyaḍikuṭṭanam ||
Karapāḍapracā_______________-

-matāh

(digi digi adavu) (Koyyaradavu)
Kecit kuttanabhedah syustattattālaprabhedatāh
Sollu - dig dig dig dig thai thaiyya

dig dig dig dig thai thaiyya

This adavu is also mentioned as Koyyaradavu. The term 'koyyaradu' in Tamil means plucking. Maintaining the body in the Ardhamandali, the feet (in Kuncita) is made to move in Agratala Sancara alongwith the circular movement of the hands. The sollu given for the adavu is dig-dig-dig-dig-thaithaiyya. The treatise further states that different types of this adavu can be improvised depending upon the variations in tāla. This adavu is not in vogue in the present day practising tradition of Bharatanatyam yet an adavu almost similar to the one described above is prevalent in the Kuchipudi dance style.

6. Utplutyotthanam-Kudicca ezhumburadu,

Utplutya bhūmāvutthānam Karapldapracaravat
Mandalam purvavacca.....Samjñitam || Iti utplutyottaham j
Sollu - Thai tatt tatt thā - thaita dhītām.

Getting up from the muzhumandi* position with a slight jump, accompanied by the movement of the hand, is known as Utplutyothānam. The mnemonics used are Thai tatt tatt thā - thaita dhītām. The text further mentions the possibility of many variations of this adavu group. The description of the adavu in the treatise seems to be insufficient and though this adavu does not exactly synchronise with the Mandi adavu of Bharatanatyam, it partially resembles with some of the variations involved in the Mandi adavu. The term Mandi means knees. In this adavu, the body positioned in the muzhumandi is slightly raised with

* Muzhumandi or Kuncita Janu :- From the Aramandi position, if the body is still lowered, where the thighs and shanks are in contact with each other and the body is held erect, the knees spread out on the sides and the feet are in Agratala position. This posture is called Muzhumandi or Kuncita Janu.
a mild jump on the toes and employing **Sikhara** hasta in both the hands, the right leg is extended sideways obliquely, thereby balancing the weight of the body on the left foot which assumes Sampada consequent upon the leg extension. The right hand is stretched and placed sideways in the direction opposite to the extended right leg. The same procedure is to be repeated with the left leg. This description given is only one variation of this adavu group. When compared to other adavu groups, this category of adavu is quite difficult to execute as it demands the balancing of weight of the entire body alternately on one leg. The **Sollu** used for the adavu is “**Thāngidu** tha tha dhinna” There are several variations of this particular adavu which arise on account of different leg extensions and hand movements.

7. **Mardana-Kudiccumettadavu**

   ![Image](image)

   With a mild jump, the ground is hit by the balls of the feet in Agratala position, followed by the heels striking the ground. The repetition of this movement is referred to as mardana by scholars of Nātya Veda. This is also called as Kuddiccu mettadavu. The memonics mentioned are Taddhi thaithai Taddhittamtam.

   The description of this adavu in the text exactly corresponds to the Kudiccu mettadavu of the present day practising tradition except for the change in the Sollu. The terms Kudiccu and **mettu** in Tamil means to jump and strike. Maintaining the posture of the body in the **Ardhamandali**, the feet simultaneously, after a mild jump are made to
stand on its balls and then brought back to strike the ground on its heels. The hand gesture used for the different variations of this adavu group are Alapadma, Kaṭakāmukha & Tripatāka hastas etc.

The Sollu adopted is Taihat-taihi.

8. Santādya Bhramanam

Santadyoddhrtya savyena pādēna bhramanam yatha |
Tathā vamena cettatsyat santadyabhramanahvayam ||
Sollu - dhaidha______________________||

After striking the right foot, it is lifted and made to swirl round in circular movement and this is to be repeated with the left foot in the similar fashion. This is called Santadya Bhramanam. The Sollu for this adavu is given as dhaidha__________||

This movement is part of Suttral adavu, current in practising tradition of Bharatanatyam. Suttru in Tamil means to swirl or rotate. This adavu involves balancing the weight of the body on one foot, while the other foot is made to swirl round. There are several variations in this adavu group which are performed to the mnemonics "That tai tarn dhit tai tarn".

9. Santādya Pārsni Kuttanam - Tatti mettadavu

Santadya Savyāvāmābhhyām parsniḥhyam kuttanam bhuvi !
Kramac cet santadya pāṇśnikuttanākhyam tatha bhavet ||
|| Santadya pāṇśnikuttanam || (Tattimettadavu)
Sollu-> Thaiyyathai - Thaiyyathai

Stamping the ground with the sole of the foot in Samapāda and later striking the ground once again in udghattita pada, is known as Santadya Parsni Kuttanam. This sequence of stamping and striking is to be repeated with both right and left foot alternately.
The sollu used are Thaivyathai - Thaivyathai.

The description of this adavu is analogous to the Tattimettadavu of the present practising tradition. The terms 'tatti' and 'mettu' refer to stamping and striking. In this adavu the body is positioned in Ardhamandali posture and one foot stamps the ground on its sole, the same foot strikes the ground, with the heel or the other foot is made to strike the ground with its forepart and heel. This adavu can be performed in all the five jatis or units of 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 rhythmic beats. Tattimettadavu is very often employed in the dance composition 'varnam' of Bharatanatyam format.

10. Mrduspars'ana or Anukkuradavu.

Sammelya savyavāmāṅagritābhyaṁ bhuspars'anam kramāt  |
drutagatya tadeva syat mṛduspars'anasamjñākam ||
|| Anukkura adavu ||

Sollu - "Taddhithai Taddhittā-tā” ||
Etani trinyanekani kalpanācitritatvam (taḥ?) ||

The adavu in which right and left foot are joined to touch the ground alternately in quick succession is called MrdusparSana or Anukkuradavu. These simple steps serve as props to the dance and as the name (mrduspars'ana) suggests they are performed without much exertion.

The mrduspars'ana adavu is identified as Nadai Adavu current in the Nṛtta of present day ‘Bharatanatyam’. The term 'Nadai' means to walk. Hence this adavu involves walking either sideways to the front, backwards or diagonally etc., employing varied hand movements. Owing to its simplicity in execution it is not practiced as in the case of adavus belonging to other groups; yet the utility of this adavu can be seen either at the commencement or in between rhythmic dance sequences or as choreographic ornamentation of the pure dance portions. It is at times employed
in Nrtya also. Hence, except for the change in the nomenclature of the adavu-(mrdusparsana- Anukkuradavu) both the Laksna and Lakṣya are in line with each other with regard to this adavu group.

11. Karsana or Simir Adavu

Ardhamandalamāsthāya pādābhyaṁ karsanam bhuvi |
Savyapasavyatasceṣṭyay proktam karaṇāhvayam ||
|| Simira adavu||
Sollu -> "Thaiyyathai" (Simiradavu)

utplutyadi prabhedena tadbhedah syuranekadha
Kramāṭpra padapaṁśhibhyāṁ karsanam bhuvi pārśvayōh |
Drutādīgatī naṭyajnaiḥ proktam karaṇa padakam ||
||Kadasakālu||
Sollu -> 'thai-thai-thai-thai

Karādivya parabhedatbhedah syuranekadha ||

Adopting the Ardhamandali position, the right and left foot are moved along the floor by rubbing against the ground alternately is called Karsana. The Sollu is Thaiyyathai. When the same movement is repeated after a jump or Utplavana in order to move further by deflecting the body on either sides with an increase in speed is called KarsanaPāda or Kadasakalu. The mnemonics for Karṣaṇapādakam is 'thai thai-thai thai'. There are many varieties possible according to the movement of the hands. Though it is called as Simiṟadavu, its description matches with the Periyadavu and partially with Simiradavu with respect to the movements of the hands. The term ‘Simir’ means to open up. Since the hands in this adavu are thrust away from the body to form a circle, the name Simiṟ might have been given to this adavu.

Periyadavu:- The term 'Periya' in Tamil means big. Both the feet in this adavu are closely placed with one foot in Kuṇcita behind the other
in Samapada. After taking a vertical jump the feet in the above mentioned position are moved in different geometrical patterns, covering extensive space. The alapadma hastas are used and the hands thrown above the head are moved circularly touching the feet. The sollus used are Ta thai thai ta dhi thai tai ta.

12. Svastikam - Tattikattaradu

Padatadanapurvya yat janghavyayayasayogatah
Niksipyam bhumou pāḍaṅgrē sthitih svastikamucyatē 
||Tattikattaradu||.

After striking with one foot, the thighs are crossed and the feet are firmly rooted on the ground in Agratala position (with the fore part touching the ground) placed one behind the other. This is called as Svastikam or tattikattaradu. The Tamil words 'Tatti' and 'Kattaradu' means striking and enclosing respectively. This adavu corresponds to the visaradavu. Visara means to spread. In this adavu, the heel of the right foot is struck on the ground and placed at a distance from the left leg and subsequently the left foot crosses the right foot as in Svastika position. The right foot is then placed on the side of the left foot. The hand and foot movement in this adavu are spread out to form an arc or semi-circular shape.

13. Sarānāgati or Pārikkiradavu

Sarānāgamanam padbhyaṁ purah pascacca parsvayoh |
Tiryaktaya yattduktam sarānāgatināmakam 
||Parikkira adavu||.

When the feet are slid along the ground in different directions either forward, backward, sideways or diagonally, it is called Saranagati adavu or Parikkiradavu. This adavu concurs with the Sarukkal adavu of the oral tradition.
The Tamil word 'Sarukkal' means to slide. In this adavu, the body is held straight with the feet in *Samapāda*, the toes pointing towards front. From this position, the right foot is placed away either sideways, front or diagonally, upon which the left foot is made to join the right by sliding towards it and by raising on the heels, the floor is hit by the forepart with a slight jump. A combination of *katakamukha-Alapadma*, *Mrgasirsa-Dola* and *Pataka* hastas are often employed in this category of adavu.

After the description of the various adavus, Sangita *Sāramrta* gives the definitions of the *Bhramaris*, Karanas, Das'avidha mandalas, etc.,. The description of the 'motita mandala' given by Tulaja corresponds with one of the variations of the ‘Mandiadavu’ of the oral tradition. Likewise, the definitions of few adavus also seem to be insufficient. However, from the gestalt view it can be said that the nomenclatures of different adavu groups and the method of its execution mentioned in this treatise conjure with the adavus in the present day practising tradition to a great extent except for minor differences. Yet the adavu system said to have been improvised and developed by Tanjore Quartette which is followed in the present oral tradition seems to be more systematic with its graded order of adavus ranging from simple to complex groups, each of which assigned to definite rhythmic mnemonic syllables.

II. An analytical study of the format of Nirupana:-

Until the later half of the 18th century, we find that Darus and Padas formed the major part of the repertoire of the Dasi-attam. A study of the format of Serfoji’s Nirupanas, reveals the incorporation of newly emerged dance forms of the period such as *Varnam* and Tillana, in addition to the already existing Darus and Padas. These dance forms
(varnam, tillana and pada) also figure in the format later systematised by Tanjore Quartette, which only indicate the potent influence exercised by the Nirupana format on the Tanjore brothers. In this direction, another important aspect worth mentioning is the close similarity of the format of Nirupana with that of Tanjore Quartette in relation to the sequential order of arrangement of dance numbers. Hence there is a felt need with contextual appropriateness to analyse the format of Nirupana with an illustration as it would highlight the significant features encompassed in the format. As the connotation of the term ‘Nirūpana’ has already been dealt with in Chapter-II, a detailed study of its format with the help of one such Nirupana out of the set of 13 Nirupanas along with the transliteration and paraphrasing of its Sahitya part, is attempted here. In this context, the Nirupana taken up for the study is -

Sakhine Nāvakice Srama Navakasakalaun Saṅghatanōpāyakaranyaci kalpita kathā (Nirūpana)\(^{(1)}\)

This Nirupana is a monologue of Sakhi acquainting Lord Kṛsna-the nayaka about heroine's love sickness.

The theme of this Nirupana is woven round the unrequited love of the Nāyikā (who is supposedly Radha) and the distress experienced by her due to her separation from the Nayaka - Lord Kṛsna. The Nāyikā’s confidant, her sakhi acts as a love messenger, who skillfully narrates the untold agony of the Nayika to Lord Kṛsna in order to reunite them and persuades Lord Kṛsna to join his lady love who is anxiously waiting to receive him. This particular Nirupana has been selected for the study on account of the thematic content that centres round the "Vipralamba

"Sṛṅgāra" (the separation of lovers), which is highly facilitating for the exposition of varying shades of Nayika-Nayaka bhavas.

This Nirupana is set to Arabhi raga, Adacau tala (Miśra capu tala).

The 18 items comprising the Nirupana are as follows:

1) Jaya Jaya  
2) Saranu  
3) Alārū  
4) Sollu  
5) Śabda  
6) Varām  
7) Pada  
8) Svarajati  
9) AbhinayaPada  
10) Tīlānā  
11) AbhinayaPada  
12) Jaṅkiṇī  
13) Gita  
14) Prabandha  
15) Tripūta  
16) Ślokavarna  
17) Koutta and  
18) Maṅgale  

All the Nirupanas commence with an auspicious beginning, with the benedictory songs "Jaya Jaya" and "Saranu". These songs are akin to the devotional songs called Todaya Maṅgalam, which are quite popular in the South Indian Bhajana Sampradaya. We find 'Tōdayam' and 'Saranu' figuring as introductory songs in Yakṣaṅgas "Sacipurandaramu" and "Sati danaśūramu" written by King Sāhaji-II. The rendering of these songs is intended to seek the divine grace for the successful completion of the Nirupana.

(1) Java Java:- This invocatory song is in praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa, glorifying his majestic deeds. The song consists of three sections namely Pallavi, Anupallavi and carana. The term 'Jaya' which means "Victory or to Hail" appears at the beginning of every verse both in Pallavi and Anupallavi sections. The lyrical lines of Todaya mangalam are also prefixed with the word 'Jaya'. Given below is transliteration and paraphrase of the song Jaya-Jaya

**Rāga** : Arabhi  
**Tala** : Adacau (Miśra capu)

|| Pallavi ||
---|---
Jaya dalita Jara Sandha | Jaya galita bhava bandha ||
**Jaya Tosita** Vibudha | Jaya dayita sadha ||

|| Jaya Jaya ||
Pallavi:
Victory to the destroyer of Jarasandha
Victory to Him who alleviates the worldly ties of bondage
Victory to the bestower of happiness to gods and enlightened ones.
Victory to Him one who is ever merciful and compassionate

Anupallavi:
Victory to the Saviour of Akrura
Victory to the redresser of misery and grief of the meek and humble
Victory to the protector of ascetics and one who has control over his body
Victory to the bestower of happiness to the devotees

Carana:
Victory to one who is fond of fresh butter
Victory to the lover of Gopis
Bestower of goodness and one who yields to the desires of worthy (one who is approached by anyone for goodness and justice)
One who brings down the ceaseless flow of auspiciousness and good omen (on this earth)

(To that Lord Krsna, we hail)
(2) **Saranu** :- This is another dedicatory hymn eulogising the many facets of Lord Krsna. The term 'Saranu' means supplication or complete surrender. Like, the earlier piece, Saranu also has three sections, **Pallavi**, Anupallavi and **Carana**, except that the words Jaya Jaya are replaced by Saranu which is found in the beginning of all the verses in the song. The two songs have the rhetorical embellishment 'antyaprasa'.

|| Pallavi ||
---
Saranu Saranu khagendra *Kētana* |
Saranu Devaki Nandana ||
   || Anupallavi ||
Saranu Naradanuta Puratana |
**Saranu** Suravara Vamana ||
   || Saranu Saranu ||
Saranu Saranu Pavitra Kirtana |
Saranu Subhakara Cintana ||
   || Carana ||
Saranu Gopi Soukhya Vardhana |
Saranu dhrta Govardhana ||
   ||Saranu Saranu||
---

Pallavi :
Supplication to the flag of Garuda
Supplication to the son of Devaki

Anupallavi :
Supplication to one who is invoked by Narada
Supplication to Vamana (4th incarnation of Lord *Visnu*) the saviour of gods
Caranam:
Supplication to the divine whose hymns are also austere
Supplication to the Lord whose thoughts bring auspiciousness and righteous thinking
Supplication to the bestower of happiness to the Gopis'
Supplication to Him who lifted the Govardhana mountain

(To that Lord Krsna, we supplicate)

It is after these two benedictory songs, that the dancer usually heralds the performance platform.

3) Alārū:- The term 'Alaru' is a dravidian word which means a flower or blossom. Its verbal form refers to blossoming, expand, open up as a flower, to shine, rejoice, etc.(1) The flowering of the dance commences from this short and simple item which introduces the aspect of Sollukattu or set of rhythmic mnemonics. The composition has three sections namely Tattakara, Alārū and Aditya. It starts with one line of tattakara* or Sollus followed by the main section Alārū which consists of series of mnemonic passages culminating into a short rhythmic finale or tirmānām known as Aditya. To the recitation of the series of Sollus, the dancer weaves movements of simple adavu patterns. The Aditya is understood to be performed comparatively to a faster speed than the other sections in the composition.

4) Sollu:- The word ‘Sollu’ in dance parlance, connotes rhythmic syllables suitable for dance. Unlike the preceding number, the Sollu kattu of the present one is not just recited like ‘bhols’ but are intended to

*Tattakaras are known as cueing rhythmic syllables that are recited after which the actual jati to be performed, takes off.
be musically rendered (in Arabhi raga) as in the case of rhythmic syllables sung in Tillāṇā. The structure of this composition consists of three caranas of sollukattus followed by a short jati section all ending with the rhythmic phrase ‘Tadhinginatom’. The Yati Nrtya mentioned in the treatise ‘Saṅgita Darpanam’ seems to be the precursor to the ‘Sollu’ of the Nirupana format. According to ‘Saṅgita Darpanam’ of Catura Dāmōdara, Yati Nrtya is defined as 'Dance to the accompaniment of a musical piece composed of solfa syllables of instrumental sounds such as ‘Tath tattathā dādhi—ti thai thai thā’.\(^{(2)}\)

5) Sabda:- The term 'Sabda' connotes rhythmic dance syllables (Tala Sollukattu). It is also generally referred to as word or sound. In the present context Sabda means the sound produced by the recitation of Sollukattu set to a rhythmic time measure. It is quite an important item in the format as it gives rise to the genesis of the story of the Nirupana which is conveyed through short lyrical passage interspersed between brief Sollukattus referred to as Sabda. This item concludes with a short tirmanam. Hence the item consists of both words as well as rhythmic sounding mnemonics, well justifying its nomenclature.

The Sahitya or lyrical passage of the dance number Sabda is as follows :-

|| Sahitya ||

Bahut divasaci bhete Gopala ||
Visaralasa janu majalā ||
Namana kar5ni tujalā ||
Mi Prarthite tujyā dayelā ||

Here the Nayika's friend (sakhi) converses with Lord Krsna and says that since a long time they have not met and so she has been forgotten by Gopala. By paying obeisance to him, she prays for his mercy to shower on her.

6) **Varnam**: This is considered to be an expansive item in the Nirūpana format. It gives much scope for continuing the narrative forward. The structure of Serfoji's varnam consists of Pallavi and Anupallavi followed by a svara passage and its corresponding Sahitya which are generally referred to as 'citta' or muktayi svara and Sahitya. The concluding section, comprises a line of Sahitya known as 'ettugada Pallavi' followed by five alternate svara and Sahitya passages. Though Serfoji has uniformly used the terms svara & Sahitya for the different sections of the varnam, they are quite characteristic of the frame work of the traditional pada varnams.

|| Pallavi ||

Je tuji prana Nayaki || Tiyeci Mi jānaSakhi

|| Anupallavi ||

Krsna aika he hitaguja || Sāṅgāyāṣi ale tuja ||

|| Sahitya ||

Far he Navala | Vāṭate maja ki | Ṭe tarīdisē |
Jagi far | Katinaśi tarihi | Maja kale Sakala |
Sarala jinasā | Tica Samaja ||

|| Far te Najuka putalī ||

(1) He Janasa mani | Tauke Sakala |
Sina na Sahe tija manauni ||

(2) Sahajamanī | Jari atavi | unasā | Tari
talamali | bahutaci pan ||

(3) Parise adhika | Vacanāṣi Jari ||
Camake njahrdayi bahuta ||

125
In this composition, the sakhi describes to the Nayaka the distressful state of the Nāyikā.

Pallavi :- "Please remember that I am the confidant and intimate friend of your most beloved Nayika who is craving for your company".

Anupallavi :- "I have come to reveal an important secret to you now and I request you to listen to it carefully".

(Muktāyi)Sāhitya :- "It is highly surprising and quite strange to see your indifference towards your beloved. Being Omnipotent and Omnicient, it is perplexing and difficult to comprehend that you are unaware of the restlessness experienced by your dear and delicate dame. I understand that, to obtain your response(grace) in this world is quite difficult, yet your beloved is an unpretentious and innocent girl. (Hence return to her soon.)

(Ettugada Pallavi) :- She is extremely a delicate dame.

Sāhitya (1) The enormity and intensity of her passion has become patent for one and all.

Sāhitya (2) The nayika when lost in your thoughts, becomes disturbed and mortified as you have distanced Yourself from her.

Sāhitya (3) I shall tell you more about her pitiable plight. When she hears anything about you, it pierces her heart and puts her to unrest.

Sāhitya (4)&(5) 'Hari' is the only name on her lips and she is unable to endure the pangs of separation, due to which even delicate blossoms
do not soothe her, on the contrary, prick her and its fragrance aggravates her tormenting condition. Hence, Oh! Lord Krsna, do not keep away from your beloved as your presence would make all the difference and is sure to comfort her.

(7) Pada :- This being an abhinaya oriented item, it provides immense scope for the dancer to exhibit her histrionic talents to the best of her abilities.

A noteworthy feature of the Nirūpana format is the inclusion of three such abhinaya pieces, the one that succeeds varnam is called 'pada' and the other two which figure after Svarajati and Tillana are referred to as 'Abhinaya pada'. The only differentiating aspect between a pada and abhinayapada in the Nirupana is the presence of svara passage in the text of the pada. In addition to the regular sections Pallavi, Anupallavi and Carana, the composition strikes a novel feature by adopting few lines of svara. Because of the inclusion of the brief Solfa passage in the composition, certain padas of Nirupanas are sometimes referred to in the manuscripts as svarapada. On the other hand, svarapada or svaraksarapada has entirely a different connotation. It is a composition in which the Solfa notes of the rāga of the said composition, become the syllables or words of the lyric and their arrangement with the alphabets conveys a definite meaning.

The pallavi and anupallavi is ensued by the svara passage which is followed by a Carana Sahitya of 4 lines.

II Pada

Pallavi:- Ugavata Candra ratri |
          Tape talamalite ati  ||
Anupallavi:- Chidaka karinta panyaca |
             Curka mani thinagyaca   ||
The Sakhi explains to the Nayaka, Lord Krsna, about the miserable condition of the Nayika.

Pallavi:- Even the cool rising moon(light) scorches this beautiful dame (Nayika) who is reeling in grief on account of your separation from her.

Anupallavi:- When drops of water are sprinkled on her, she feels extremely painful as if sparks of fire are thrown off at her.

Carana :- If Lord Hari, her own lover is going to continue with such unconcerned and uncaring attitude towards his beloved, then what will be the state of the Nayika endowed with beautiful teeth. The heat produced due to her afflictions seems to eclipse the power of the Sandal paste applied on her body which causes hallucination and her behaviour appears to be strange. Likewise I have much more to tell you about the nayika, so please listen to it.

(8) Svarajati:- The Svarajatis are akin to the structural format of the varnams, in the Nirupanas except for the absence of Pallavi and Anupallavi sections. Generally, the Svarajatis of the Nirupana format have 4 to 6 passages of alternating Svara and Sahitya passages. The present Svarajati has six such Svara passages each of which is followed by a corresponding Sahitya portion.

|| Svarajati ||

(1) Sahitya :- Tuje rupaca hrdayanta jadale tijaşī Hari |
(2) Harite gamate jadakari Nirakhuni |  
Bahutaci andhakara dithi ||

(3) Mani camaka nadharûni Krsna Sampa  
Nirakhuni kara pasari tu manuni ||

(4) Sakala munijana bahuta kathin tapa  
Kariti Hari tuja nirakhu manuni ||

(5) Parisa maga navala kiti he tari yadupati  
Hari tava ramanîca nija ||

(6) Sakala Visarataci Samajuni atavi nija  
hrdaiy tulâca Hari ||

(1) Oh! Lord Hari, she has enshrined you in her heart. (She has imprinted and engraved in her, the sweet memories relating to you).

(2) Her mind is loaded and stored up with your thoughts so much so that, even on hearing the footsteps of the pedestrians (pass'ers-by) she at once gets up and with keen eyes looks out, desiring it to be, you. Alas! not finding you anywhere there, the nayika is thoroughly disappointed and her heart is filled with sorrow and remorse.

(3) But by recollecting the sweet and happy reminiscences of the past (lovemaking), she is overwhelmed with joy and while engrossed in such thoughts, your nayika is unaware of her surroundings and her actions become bereft of reasoning, to the extent that she stretches her hand forward to behold a black cobra, mistaking it to be you.(Here the colour of the snake (krsnasamp) is indicative of the complexion of Lord Krsna and the sāhitya bespeaks of the Nāyikā’s unalloyed and intensified
feelings of love for the Lord as she identifies Krsna in animate and inanimate objects).

(4) All the sages perform hard penance in order to have the vision of Your divine form.

(5 & 6) It is surprising and strange, yet Oh! Yadupati listen to me, (Hari) you are the subject of her thoughts and every act of hers reflects her yearning to unite with you. She has forgotten everything and does not attach importance to material things. Her heart is filled with your thoughts; such is her love sickness, so have mercy on her and return to her at once.

(9) Abhinava pada:-

The abhinaya padas of the Nirupana format exactly conform with the traditional padams with regard to its component sections - Pallavi, Anupallavi followed by 2-3 caranas. Padams in general are pregnant with Srngära rasa depicting the theme of love and different shades of the Nāyikā-Nāyaka bhāvas. But the Abhinaya padas of the Nirūpanas are not purely Srngāra based as they project philosophical and devotional themes also. The thematic content of Padas and Abhinayapadas varies depending upon the nature of the story line and the contextual appropriateness of the composition with regard to that particular Nirupana. For example, the 'Dandanithi Nirūpana' centres round the conversation between Lord Rama and Hanuman regarding the norms to be followed for punishing the enemies at war.

In the Abhinaya pada of this Nirūpana, Lord Rāmā advises Hanuman and cautions him of the treacherous Ravana's cruel thinking and actions. Yet, the present Abhinaya pada taken for illustration, is replete with Vipralambha Srngara and the theme gets further developed as the sakhi
expresses to Lord Krsna the anguish and love pangs experienced by his beloved.

|| Pallavi ||
Manatūje pāyi jadale | dolārūpathasāvalē
|| Anupallavi ||
Jikade Tikade Pahe tujalā | tujavina na kale tijalā
|| Caranam ||

(1) Trna atatanci baheri | Uthōni baise śējēvari
Rokha lāuniyā dvari | Padara ghete Sirāvari
(2) Ani ūice srāma pahuna | konetari vyasane
Krsna mahanta houni dangā | puse kothe ahe Sanga
(3) Vārmvāra Sangu Kiti | mānite te far khanti
Tijavari Kṛpā kari Sarabhendraca Kaivari

Pallavi :-
The nayika has supplicated and surrendered herself at Your feet and her eyes mirror your image.

Anupallavi:-
Wherever she glances, there she finds you. Without You nothing pleases her, she doesn't find a recourse. (The poetic style is lucid and understandable when Serfoji-II uses the words Jikade-Tikade; which mean here and there.)

Carana (1)
When a blade of grass moves, expecting it to be the sound produced by your footsteps she at once gets up from the bed and covering her head with the saree looks out at the door step.

Carana: (2)
Looking at her maddening actions and love sickness, it is obvious for anybody to comment that she has been addicted
to *Krsna* (*Krsna’s* love). But the very mention of his name by the people, she, out of exciting confusedness creates mess of the things around her and eagerly questions as to where her Lord is.

**Caranam (3)**

Oh! Lord how often should I explain the miserable plight and the untold agony experienced by the *Nāyikā*. Hence, Oh! Lord, the protector of Sarabhendra please be compassionate and show mercy on her and ameliorate the nayika from her sufferings.

(10) **Tillānā**: -

The term ‘*Tillānā*’ derives its name from Hindustani musical form Tarana. The composition is indeed a scintillating dance number in the format as it employs varied rhythmic patterns of Sollus which are usually embedded with the name of the composition such as Diri *diri tillānā* and so on. The Tillana comprises three sections - the first is a long drawn out passage of Sollukattu followed by three lines of *Sāhitya* which once again carry the narrative forward. The *Tillānā* then concludes with a short cadence of rhythmic mnemonics.

|| Tillana ||

*Sahitya* :-  

Sadaya hoyi murari he *tu avadhāri*  

Atamtari *tujavinā* sangahari  ||

*Ticē mahāśīna* kona vari

Please listen to me, Oh! Murari and tell me who else can alleviate the extreme grief of the nayika except you. Hence, Hari! be compassionate towards her and assuage her afflictions.
(11) **Abhinaya Pada** :-

The structure of this composition is analogous to the abhinayapada, the item preceding tillana. The composition starts with Pallavi, Anupallavi followed by three caranas.

**Abhinaya Pada**

Pallavi:- Baya kanca ha svabhava |
           ugaca nathavari rusave []
Anupallavi:- Faraca karita hi priti |
           manita asane sthriyani ati pritine ||

Carana(l):- \( \text{Nāyakāsa} \) sahaje kaduna nenatipe adhika
           une bolane ha na ho avaguna ||

(2):- \( \text{Tiyēvari} \) tu yadunatha | karita hotāsi
      adhika \( \text{mamata} \) | Teha bolata \( \text{kāye.gadalē} \) ki avacita ||

(3):- \( \text{Atā ghari} \) ruji kāntā | Far pave(viraha) avastha |
      Daya karavi Tijavari atā | Sarabhendra stuta ||

Pallavi:-

It is the stock habit of women to often resent and get annoyed with their spouses.

Carana(l):-

If a wife is bestowed with immense love by her husband, then she takes it for granted that her husband is in her sole possession. But the husband though aware of it, pretends to be ignorant of all this and if the wife comes to know of his pretensions, then out of impatience caused due to extreme love, may speak ill of her husband. But this cannot be understood as a bad quality.
Carana(2):-

Oh! Yadunatha, you showered enormous affection on her alas, what has happened to You, all of a sudden, did she utter anything wrong.

Carana(3):-

The Nayika is lamenting in her house, her condition is extremely pitiable and she is longing to meet You, Hence Oh! Lord worshipped by Sarabhendra show mercy and join her soon.

(12) JakkinT:–

This is a very ancient dance form which figured in the middle of the dance dramas. We find the mention of this dance form in the works of King Vijayaraghava Nayaka, who was himself a celebrated composer of many such desi dance forms. His court dancer ‘Mūrti’ is said to have gained extraordinary proficiency in this particular dance number. There are scholars who maintain two versions regarding the derivation of the term ‘Jakkini’.

"According to Dr. V. Rāghavan(1), the ‘Jakkini Daruvu’ a Natya Dhruva has derived its name by the performers who are known as ‘Jakkulu’(Jakkuluvāru). But another scholar Sri Y. Satyanarāyana Rao(2) opines that "since Jakkulu being wandering tribal folk", could not have performed, these darus which are classical in nature. He further states that "JakkinT is a distorted form of yakshini in Sanskrit and that Jakkinis perform dances with Mrdaṅgams hanging on their waists and the daruvus

(2) Ibid • We also find the reference to the term 'Jakkula' in the 14-15th century work Kridābhīrāman.
composed for this type of dance are called Jakkini Daruvus". The savant further opines that "the term might have also been derived from the instrument Jakki or light drum used for ritual music". Regardless of these varied versions, Jakkini as a dance composition had been quite popular right from the Nayak upto the Maratha period.

King Sāhajī was a reputed author of Jakkinidaru prabandha comprising five darus set to different ragas. The composition structure of a Jakkinī daru in the format of Nirupana is a combination of Sollukattu, Sahitya and Svaras. This composition, starts with a brief passage of Sollukattu continued by a line of Svara and two verses of Sahitya. This is ensued by 4 lines of Solfa passages. In the first passage svara and sollus are interspersed which incorporate certain euphonical wordings such as Yellām, Yallilām lāle etc. The Sahitya of the Jakkini daruvus may centre round themes which are devotional or otherwise is based on the story content of the Nirupana.

Jakkinī

Sāhitya:-

Anēkanāyikā māji | Tilatula Far rāji ||
ka as'a kopa aji | dharila ka kṛṣṇāci ā

Amongst your many nāyikās, my friend is the most beloved to You, Oh! Kṛṣṇa but why is this anger towards her to day?

(13) Gīta:-

Generally 'Gīta' as a composition in the present day does not belong to the realm of dance musical form, but has a significant place in the field of art music. Gītas are known as one of the preliminary lessons or exercises taught to the beginners of art music as it creates vivid understanding of the raga structure and also helps in providing thorough
exercise to the vocal chords. Several such Gitas called 'Pillari gitas' were composed by Sangita pitāmaḥa Sri Purandaradasa, for the benefit of practitioners of the art. But texts like Saṅgīta muktavali of Devanācārya(1) and Sangīta Darpana of Dāmōdaža(2) mention Gīta prabandha and Gīta respectively as definite items of dance. These genres have been incorporated in the sequential order of dance numbers stated by them. Perhaps due to this reason, Serfoji-II also might have included the composition 'Gīta' as an item of dance in the Nirūpanas.

The composition Gīta of Nirūpana format has svara and Sahitya interwoven and interestingly the interspersed syllables such as 'Sa- ng - u', etc., which when combined together form the libretto of the composition.

\[ \text{Gīta} \]

Mi sangu kounasa Hari
nahe ki he dusari
Japakhi maji sakhi tulā beda |
Tuja Sangatine te pōuramanāśi
Thaukonj jhāli prouda catura riari |
aikaja.

To whom shall I tell this, Oh! Hari that one is not like the other. My friend has become mad and is craving for your company, now go and understand her. Your indifference is because of the insane company with which you are associating, but in your company, the nāyikā will give up her childishness and become matured and a clever lady. Please listen to me (Oh! Lord Kṛṣṇa)

(2) K Vāsūdēva Sāstrī - Ed., - Saṅgīta Darpana of Catura Dāmōdaža - T.M.S Series No.34., P.217 Verses 201-203
(14) **Prabandha:**

It is another form, similar to the preceding number Gita. It has both svara and Sahitya passages interwoven along with brief line of Sollus interspersed in between svara passages. Like in Gita, here also we find the presence of the scattered syllables and their extensions which, when combined together become the words of the Sahitya connoting the meaning of the lyric. In some of the Nirupanas for example 'Saripataca dāva Kalpita Katha'- Nirupana, Serfoji has deleted the prabandha composition.

Visaravile Hari tatice aptaloka
Sakala hi tijala | Deva adhika adara jane vada.

In your love she has forgotten her near and dear and so Oh! Hari now give her happiness and loving care.

(15) **Triputa:**

This belongs to the prabandha type of composition and has all the three angas namely svara, sollu and sahitya incorporated in it. The term triputa means "having three putas or parts". The three aspects svara, sollu and Sahitya are enfolded together like the putas or petals of flower, which mean, the exposition of the three elements would be as beautiful as the blossoming of a flower. A notable feature of this composition is that all the three angas are combined or assembled arbitrarily so much so that they are not separately distinguishable. But surprisingly in this Nirupana, we do not find the Sahitya incorporated in the Triputa and the composition comprises only svara and sollu lines intermingled with each other.

(16) **Sloka varna:**

Sloka varnas may mean verses set to definite ragas and intended to be
sung in those Rāgas\(^1\). Many such sloka varnas in Lalitapancama raga have been quoted as Laksya pieces by King Tulaja-I in Raga chapter of his work “Saṅgita Sārāmṛta”. According to (temple) Agama sāstras there is a tradition of reciting slokas or verses in praise of gods called churnikas before offering puspanjali to the deities.\(^2\) Churnika is also referred to as a literary form sung in Devagandhari rāga, in loose rhythm which figures in operas.\(^3\) Such a Chūrnikā is also found in Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam an opera composed by Saint musician Sri Tyagararaja.

Yet, this composition belongs to the field of applied music, wherein the words are important and music is applied or used for the purpose of singing the Sahitya. Such songs are portrayed only through abhinaya (devoid of Nṛttā) as they pertain to the Anibaddha type where the music of the composition is not conditioned and bound by any specific time measure, tala and is not characterised by the presence of svara passages.

But, Serfoji-II on the contrary has introduced in his sloka varnas, svara passage along with Sahitya, both of which are in conformity with a definite tala (miśra cāpu) and raga. As Sahitya is akin to slokas or verses with rhetorical embellishment and more of a descriptive nature as in the case of varna, hence the name sloka varna might have been given to this composition. Sloka varna facilitates in the delineation of theme in reaching the final stages of the narrative (story).

This composition commences with four lines of Sahitya and culminates in to two line svara passage. The verses in the Sahitya have the rhetorical embellishment 'antya prasa'.

\(^{1}\) S. Subramanya Sāstri - Ed. - Saṅgita Sārāmṛta of King Tulaia - published by The Music Academy, Madras - 1942 - P.53


Oh! Hari, it was you who combed and plaited the hair of the Nayika with your hands and even protected her with utmost care but now, you have abandoned and deserted her. How can she forget such an acute grief?

(17) Kautta:-
This penultimate item in the format of Nirūpāna is referred to as Kautta. According to Bharatārṇava of NandikesVāra, a Kouta or Koutuka is defined as composition in particular tālas formed of instrumental sounds intermixed with words in praise of a deity and the three letters Ka-u -ta represent the goddesses Sarasvati - Mahalaksmi and Parvati respectively. This item is to be performed after a ‘Ridi’ or a composition in instrumental music syllables, following the Nandi in Ada tāla. As per the temple ritualistic music and dance, Kavuttuvam is an item performed to the accompaniment of various musical instruments. Sollus and that the Sahitya intended for the propitiation and glorification of the presiding deity of the temple is only to be recited and should not be musically rendered. Interestingly, the Kautta of Nirupana, starts with a passage of Sollus intermixed with Sāhitya that is to be sung followed by a brief section of Jati. The Sahitya of Kautta brings the story or the narrative of the Nirupana to an end. Kautta’s Hindustani dance counter part known as Kavitha is an item comprising verses intermixed
with bhols set in the tala patterns which are to be rhythmically recited and the meaning of it expressed through abhinaya.

Kautta

Sahitya:-

Vinavite mi Karyugajoduni Vanduni
Tujala nija sukha deuni tijala
Sarabhendra stuta murali lōlā  ||

Oh! Murali lōlā, the one worshipped by Sarabhendra with both the hands folded and with sheer humility, I,(sakhi) pray to you to bestow my friend, your beloved with real happiness.

Serfoji strikes a philosophical note in the phrase Nijasukha or real happiness signifying the lofty ideal and essence of madhura bhakti - Jivātma (Nayika) yearning to unite with Paramātma (Nayaka).

(18) Mangale:-

It has been a customary practice for any programme of music and dance to commence and end with a benedictory song and the one that figures towards the end of the performance is referred to as Maṅgalam or an auspicious and a propitious finale which is called as Mangaje in Marathi. This song is only musically rendered unaccompanied by dance and is intended to seek the divine grace and requesting the almighty to pardon any lacuna inadvertently committed by the artists during the course of the performance. Resembling 'Jaya Jaya' in its structure, Mangale, the concluding item in the format of Nirūpaṇa, has all the three regular sections - Pallavi, Anupallavi and a Carana.

Maṅgale

Pallavi:-

Mangale Lakṣmi Nāyakāśi |
Maṅgale Tuja Madhavasi  ||
Anupallavi:- Āṅgalaǘcyayā janaकāśi
Sagara sukha Sayanāśi subha mangale ||

Carana:-
Divya Pakśindrayānāśi
Daitya brnda dala nāśi |
Gavyadaci baksakāśi |

Bhavya Sarabhendra pāliśi mangale ||

Pallavi:- Maṅgale to Lakṣmi Nayaka
Maṅgale to Madhava

Anupallavi:- Mangale to the father of cupid, one who reclines in the milky ocean.

Carana:- Maṅgale to the divine bird Garuda
Maṅgale to the destroyer of the congeries of demons
Mangale to the one who is fond of milk and butter
Maṅgale to the protector of the humble Sarabhendra

Thus the royal composer has painted, vividly on the canvas of Nirupana, the different shades of the Nayika in Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra. Rasaprakaraṇam a work on the theory of aesthetics compiled by Muwallur Sabhapattayya identifies five different sources of Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra such as Ayoga (separation), Viraha (abandonment), Mana (indignation), Pravasa (dwelling abroad), and Sāpa (curse).

Among these, the first two causative factors have been clearly elucidated by Serfoji-II through the actions of the Nayika such as -

(1) Cinta or anxiety to fulfill the desire of uniting with the lover shown by Nayika's actions through sighing and restlessness on hearing the footsteps of the pass'ers-by and with the movement of blade of grass.

(2) Sankalpa or yearning for the beloved, shown by recollecting happy reminiscences of the past and being engrossed in the thoughts and unaware of her surroundings.
(3) Kriyadvesa or spurning of things such as beautiful flowers and cool moonlight giving scorching effect etc., thinking only of the beloved and enshrining him in her heart.

(4) Tapa or tormenting situation, shown by restlessness and having no curative efficacy even after the application of Sandal paste on the body.

(5) Lajjatyaga:-dispensing the dignity by being unmindful of people's remarks (Krsna vyasana)

(6) Unmāda - maddening actions by being unaware of her actions such as beholding anything that is black in colour (black cobra) as her beloved Lord Krsna.

All these states of love have been very aptly projected by means of fine illustrations in the Nirūpana which are only axiomatic in proving the scholar king's proper moorings in the theory of aesthetics.

The Format of Sadir - Bharatanatyam systematised and standardised by the Tanjore Quartette -

Unlike the format of Nirupana, adhering to the Ekartha type or single theme narrated by one or more danseuse with the help of 18 different thematically interlinking items set to Eka raga and tāla, the Tanjore Quartette on the otherhand have focused on the format based on Prthagarttha type adopting different themes to be portrayed by a single danseuse (Ekaharya Lāsyāṅga) by means of varied dance numbers composed to variegated ragas and tālas. In the context of single theme or more, both Raja Serfoji-II and the Tanjore Quartette have carefully followed the Natya Sastra which describes in detail the characteristics and application of the Lasya dance. According to it, the Lasya, which is so called because of its shining(Lasana), is to be performed by one person and its subject matter also should be suitable and the theme may
have one or many topics.\(^{(1)}\) Natya śāstra mentions 12 types of Lāsyāṅgas\(^{(2)}\).

In addition to the Nātya Sastra, a study of many ancient treatises, throws much light on the sequential order of items that was followed during their respective periods. The Nrtya adhyaya of 'Sangita Ratnakaram' of Niśā́ṅka Sāṅgadeva, (13th century) gives 10 such Desī Lāsyāṅgas,\(^{(3)}\) some of which involve the rhythmic movements of different parts (major and minor limbs) of the body in dance.

The 10 Lasyas are as follows:-

1) Cāli  
2) Calivada  
3) Ladhi  
4) Suka  
5) Uroṅgaṇa  
6) Dhasaka  
7) Āṅgahāra  
8) Oyaraka  
9) Vihasi  
10) Mana

Sangita Mukțāvali, a 15th century work on dance, authored by Devanacarya (Devendra), a court poet of Proudha Devaraya of Vijayanagar (16th century A.D.) gives a series of items, which adhere more closely to the sequence of a solo recital of a female dancer.

The items\(^{(4)}\) are :-

1) Puṣpānjali  
2) Mukha Cāli  
3) Sūḍḍha-yati Nṛtta  
4) Rāgaṅga-yati Nṛtta  
5) Sabda Nṛtta  
6) Rupa-Nṛtta (i.e., dance and abhinaya of song compositions or Rūpakas)  
7) Dhvada  
8) Sabdacali  
9) Sūḍja Sabda;  
10) Sūḍaṅga

Various Gita prabandhas, dances to compositions more definitively local - Cindu, Daru, Dhrupad etc.

---

(1) A Board of Scholars - Translation into English - The Nātya Śāstra of Bharatamuni - P.442; Verses 426-435

(2) Ibid PP.443-445; Verses 436-479.


(4) Cf.Dr V. Raghavan - ‘Bharatnatya’, The Journal of the Music Academy, Madras, Vol. XL.V.P.245
Likewise ‘Saṅgīta Darpanam’ another treatise on music and dance written around 16th century by Catura Dāmōdara Pandita, mentions in the beginning of its Dance Chapter-Nrtyadhyaya the following sequence of items\(^{(1)}\):

1) Mukha cāli  
2) Yati nrtta  
3) Sabdacāli  
4) Uḍupa  
5) Dhruva  
6) Suda Sabda  
7) Kvāda  
8) Gita Nrtyam  
9) Cindu Nrtyam  
10) Desī Kattari Nṛttam  
11) Vaipota  
12) Sabda Nṛttam  
13) Kalpanṛttam

The work further mentions certain desi dance forms such as Jakkani dhroupadam, perāṇi and gondali nṛtyam.

In olden days, the preliminary propitiatory composition of Sadir dance before the dancer's entrance to the stage started with Melaprapti or the Orchestral co-ordination of various musical instruments, beginning with playing on the mrdangam followed by several other instruments (VSdyabrnda). This was followed by nattuvanar keeping the time measure by wielding the cymbals and reciting the Sollukattus. Inbetween the melapraphti, Tōdayamaṅgalam an invocatory song was sung with an avowed purpose to seek the blessings of the almighty for the successful completion of the performance. This initial music was set to prescribed raga and tāla.

But in present day Bharata Nātyam recitals, all these preliminary proceedings have been modified and reduced to the minimum on account of the frenetic activity which is also due to paucity of time. The performance commences with an invocatory song called Gaṇeśa stuti, invoking the blessings of Lord Ganes'a, followed by nattuvanar's recitation of short śollukattu. It is after the completion of

\(^{(1)}\) K. V. Subrahmaniyar - Ed. Saṅgīta Darpana of Catura Dāmōdara - T.M.S Series No.34, 1952-P. 183 - Verses-1-7
these brief preliminaries that the dancer enters the stage to perform the first dance number of the Bharatanatyam format called Alarippu. Since Bharatanatyam basically evolved as an art practised within the sacred precincts of the temple, there is a practice in the present day recitals to include Puṣpāṇjali and Kavuttuvam before starting with the Alarippu with a view to reviving these old ritualistic dances. We find the reference of Puṣpāṇjali as the preliminary item in the sequential order of dance numbers mentioned by Devendra in his treatise 'Sangitamuktavali', likewise 'Bharatārṇava' of Nandikesvara also mentions Puṣpāṇjali or preliminary offering of flowers, as an item to be performed at the beginning of Sapta Lāṣyā(1), in order to yield beneficial results. The work further illustrates the two modes of performing the puspanjali dance, the one being Daivika (celestial) and the other known as Mānusa(Human)(2). As the names suggest the Daivika mode is to be adopted by celestials and Mānusa mode by human beings, but the celestials are privileged to use either mode unlike the human beings. In the Daivika mode, first puspanjali is to be performed by the dancer, who shall propitiate the gods first, except when the dance is performed in the presence of the Trinity, their consorts, Maha Ganapati, Skanda and the seven mothers(3)

This is followed by dances prescribed in the original texts, and in the case of Manusa mode, 'mukhacāli' is to be followed after Puspanjali. In this mode puspanjali is always offered to the divine couple, Lord Siva and Parvati first and then begins the seven dances called Sapta Lāṣyas. The work prescribes the rules regarding the worship of the presiding deities of the eight quarters - Asta Dikpalas. Further the kinds of flowers

(1) K. Vāsudēva Sīstrī - Editor - "Bharatārṇava" of Nandikesvara I.M.S Series No. 74; Chapter-XV - P457; verses 889-898  
(2) Ibid-P.458, verses 889-898  
(3) Ibid - PP.461-462; Verses 898-910
to be used and also the mode of offering them to different deities have also been clearly elucidated in the work. Hence, *Puşpanjali* became an indispensable part of the temple ritual which was performed to seek the blessings of the Gods and Goddesses in order to ward off obstacles and to bring good fortune and prosperity to the governing forces—the Kings as well as the people and the members of *Vādyabṛnda* and above all for the success in the art taught by the Natyacaryya or the dance teacher. Owing to its auspicious significance, this item also figured as part of the Nandi in *Pūrvaraṅga* rituals of dance and dance dramas. In the literature of Nayak period also we find the reference to the Puspanjali dance. King Raghunatha in his work Valmiki Caritra, describing the dance of *Rambhā*, the celestial nymph, mentions *Puşpaṇjali* as the opening dance number.

In the catalogue of the Sanskrit manuscripts of Thanjavur Sarasvati Mahal Library, one such manuscript contains 'Lasya *Puşpaṇjali*' written by an unknown author. The term lasya seems to be an emphasis on the delicate and graceful presentation of the *Puşpaṇjali*. According to *Natyasastra*, Lasya was first inaugurated by Goddess *Pārvati* which was the delicate, graceful and gestureless dance that formed part of the preliminaries of a drama. Like *Puşpaṇjali*, the main objective of this dance according to Abhinava gupta, the commentator of *Nātyaśāstra* was for "adrstaphala i.e., for pleasing gods and avoiding obstacles".

---

1. Sanskrit manuscript No.-D. 10714. The text of this Lasvapuspanjali is given in the Appendix.
2. *Nātyaśāstra* - Chapter.IV (249-50)
3. Ibid - Chapter XXXI-333
Owing to the similarity in the purpose of both lasya and puspanjali, the term lasya might have been prefixed to the *Puṣpāṇjali* and in all probability *Puṣpāṇjali* according to Tanjore style seems to have been referred to as 'Lasya Puṣpāṇjali'.

Likewise *Kavuttuvams*, being ritualistic dance forms were performed especially during temple festival (Brahmotsva) celebration. According to Pancamarabu of Arivanar the sound produced by the verbal utterances of *sollu* synchronising with the rhythmic sounding of syllables such as *Tōm Tōm* Kirakita etc. played on *Mrdaṅgam* - *tāla* vadya is called *Kavuttuvam*. It is also known as ottu *Kavuttuvam* or Vayimozhi Kavufuvam i.e. the verbal recitation of sollus(oral drumming)(1).

In ancient Tamil music, the *Kavuttavams* incorporated *sollus* which when combined with other syllables lent meaning to the lyrical portion. For example - the phrase 'Tam Tam *endru, Tammayē* nennai tarn' in Tamil means 'thinking about ones own *welfare*, one thinks of oneself. In this the sollu 'Tam tarn' which means, myself also serves as sollu aksaras conveying meaning to the Sahitya. Special Kavuttuvams known as Pancamurti and Navasandhi Kavuttuvams were composed by Gangai-muttu annavi, the grand father of Tanjore Quartette.

(1) *Alarippu*:-

The term Alarinpu is a verbal noun form derived from the Telugu word 'Alarincu' which means to please or *gratify*(2). The dance number is performed to the *pāṭāksaras* or rhythmic syllables *Tā* thai thaiyyum……. recited by the nattuvanar unaccompanied by raga. But there is a practice

---


(2) Vide - lecture delivered by Dr. Anidir. on *The format of Bharatanatvam*, at S.N. School, University of Hyderabad. 1992.
in some schools to sing Tiruppugazh as an accompaniment to the sollukattu recited by the nattuvanar. However this item seems to be the replica of the Suddhayati Nṛtta mentioned in the treatises as it is performed purely to the rhythmic mnemonic utterances, devoid of raga and Sahitya. The choreographic pattern of the dance is highly suggestive of its name - the blossoming of dance, as the dancer gradually opens up the major and minor limbs of the body to perform varied movements that are pleasing and beautiful to look at. The Alarippu begins with the dancer standing in the samapāda stance in perfect repose with her hands outstretched horizontally sideways at the shoulder level holding patakahasta (Nātyārāmbham position). She then lifts the hands symmetrically on the head holding Afijalihasta,* which are gradually brought down near the face and then near the chest level. All the three positions represent the reverence offered to Gods (on the head) to the Guru (near the face) and to the assembly of spectators (at the chest level) respectively, thus fulfilling the concept of Sabhavandanam and at the same time invoking the grace of the almighty and offering obeisance to the dance teacher. In this direction Alarippu seems to be a closer variant of Puspañjali.

The dancer first employs the upangas - the beautiful eye glances (Drstibhedas), along with the subtle, lateral movements of the neck (Śundarīgrīvā or otherwise known as Attami in dance parlance) and to the s'ollus vocalised in the vilamba kāla or slow speed, the dancer gradually using the other parts of the body executes symmetrically, the different fascinating geometrical adavu patterns, in its simplest form. These movements, initially performed in the standing and Ardhamandali postures are once again duplicated in the Muzhumandi, balancing the weight of the body on the heels. In no other item in the format one

* Anjalihasta - when the palms of both the pañka hastas are clasped together, (he hasta is known as Anjalihasta.)
can see such a long durated muzhumandi position as in the case of this particular number. The dancer further weaves beautiful adavu patterns to the recitation of pāṭākṣaras in madhya and drutakala (medium and quadruple speeds). In the drutakala the choreography employs swift display of Tat tai taha adavu which culminates into a short tirmanam (using the s'ollu Tadhiginatom of Ṭirmāna adavu) which gives a crowning effect to the entire dance number and due to this reason, the tirmanam of Alarippu is also called as makutam.

Alarippu is set to ekatala, but performed to either of the five jatis or units consisting rhythmic beats of 3-TisVam, 4-Caturaśram, 5-Khandam, 7-Misram and 9-Saṅkirnam, and hence are identified by the jati to which it is performed. Alarippu being introductory item serves the dual purposes of sabhavandanam on one hand and as prefatory and warming up number for the dancer as it involves the unfolding of the major and minor limbs of the body in periodicity and preparing the dancer not only physically but with a psychological makeup to become alert in successfully executing the more complicated aspects of the abstract dance that are to follow in the different genres in the format. It is not only a warming up dance number for the dancer alone but also for musicians in preparing themselves for greater demands called for in the ensuing numbers. Though a short number, introducing the rudimentary elements of Nrtta. Alarippu is indicative of the manifold aspects of the art and also the structural complexities present in the succeeding items in the format.

(2) Jatisvaram:

After acquainting the dance performed purely to the accompaniment of Sollukattus in the preliminary item, the element of raga or melody is introduced in the second item called Jatisvaram where the rhythmic
sequences - Jatis set to a rhythmic time measure are well matched to the musical setting or the groupings of the solfa notes - svaras of that respective raga in which the composition is composed. The Rāgāṅga yati nṛtta mentioned in the treatise Saṅgīta Muktavali seems to be the ancient counter part of the present day Jatisvaram. Unlike the Sollu of Nirupana format, where Sollukattus are recited on the pattern of the musical setting of the svara like svara sollu, Jatis or rhythmic sequences in Jatisvaram are not performed to the sollus vocalised but are executed to musical rendition of the svaras by the singer i.e. different korvais are matched to the musical settings of the svaras that are rendered. Initially before the period of Tanjore Quartette, 'Jatisvaram used to be literally Jatis set to a melodic format and it was only later that svara passages were grafted to them(Jatis) and this was done by Tanjore Quartette to enhance the beauty of this number and since then the dance has remained Jati based". In this direction it is worthy to note that the dance musical form svarapallavi perhaps an older form of present Jatisvaram is also a composition devoid of Sahitya and intended to be presented as pure dance number to the rendition of svara phrases and recitation of sollus set to a specific time measure. The structure of svarapallavi has three component parts Pallavi, Anupallavi and Carana. Pallavi is generally presented in madhyamakāla unlike the carana in drutakāla and few svarapallavis also have Sahitya for its pallavi section. As Alārippu is known by the Jati to which it is performed so is the case with Jatisvarams, where it is identified by the raga to which it is composed. Apart from the employment of single raga to the Jatisvaram, a string of ragas are also used in the last svara passage of Anupallavi section. Such Jatisvarams

are referred to as rāgamālīka Jatisvarams. The dancer begins the Jatisvaram with beautiful eye glances and simultaneously employs rhythmic stamping of the feet which cue the commencement of the brisk tirmānam, which not only imparts rhythmic brilliance but apparently establishes the tempo and pace of this item. This is followed by Pallavi and Anupallavi sections. The Pallavi section consists of a svara passage which is repeated 3-4 times and is well matched by the dancer weaving four different rhythmic dance patterns.

In contrast to pallavi section, the anupallavi comprises of 2-3 svara passages which are rendered only once.

The korvais in the pallavi section are usually performed in the slow and medium tempo and for each of the pallavi refrain, the dancer executes dance sequences that incorporate, the best permutations and combinations of adavus culled from simpler to the complex group of adavus. Generally in the last Pallavi refrain the korvai employs the internal subdivisions of the beats within the tāla known as nadai which enhances rhythmic vitality and dynamism of pure dance. These korvais are performed in juxta-position to the right and left in the symmetrical fashion. The beauty of these korvais bespeaks of the choreographers competency in exploring and improvising within the range of pure dance of Bhratanatyam to bring about artistically conceived dance sequences that are aesthetic and arresting in nature. A noteworthy feature in the Jatisvarams is that every solfa passage is punctuated towards its end with rhythmic finale which covers the space geometrically through linear and diagonal movements. After several encores of the pallavi, follows the svarapassages of Anupallavi section which introduce the nuances of the raga of the composition along with equally bewitching variegated dance sequences that are mostly performed in drutakala.
In addition to the elements of jati and raga, the 3rd genre in the format acquaints with the lyrical aspect or Sahitya which is interpreted through abhinaya. Sabdams have a simple musical setting and since it introduces the poetic text for the first time in the format, the interpretation of Sahitya by means of abhinaya is not amplified upon. Since the theme of the Sabdams are centered round the glorification of the deeds of the Gods, Kings or venerable persons, they are also termed in Sanskrit as YasogTtis.

The composition consists of four Sahitya passages each of which is set to different raga but one single tala usually being misra capu. Previously Sabdams were not set to ragamalika but were sung in one raga, usually Kambhoji and Misracapu tala. Interestingly even the Sabdams set to ragamalika, begin with the Kambhoji raga. The Sabdam commences with cueing syllables 'tat taiya tai datta tarn' followed by short passage of sollukattu (tadana tandana) that are to be sung, like the 'sollu' of Nirupana. In between the Sahitya passages are couched brief jati sequences which are also musically recited. The item gets winded up with slightly elaborate passage of sung sollukattu compared to its previous ones. The sabdams were performed both in the court* as well as in the temple and the last lyrical line in the Sabdam invariably ends with the salutary verse “Sallāmure” (which means Salute unto thee). But in the sabdams performed in the present day Bharatanatyam we find the word ‘Sallamure’ being replaced by ‘Namostute’.

The term ‘Sallāmu’, though crept into the Telugu language, was a derivative of the urdu word Sallam, which means to ‘Salute’ or greet. perhaps on account of the influence of muslim rule over Andhra around

* Sabdams in praise of Raja Serfoji-II have been listed in the Appendix.
late 17th century A.D. Darus incorporating the term 'Sallamu' called Sallamdarus became popular dance musical forms in Tanjore.

From the literature of the Nayak period, it is inferred that sabdas constituted an important dance number in the format of dance as Champakavalli and Chandrarekha, the court dancers of Vijayaraghava Nayaka were the celebrated exponents of 'sabda' Who were conferred the titles 'sabda cudamani' and 'sabda cintāmani' respectively.

(4) **Varnam** :-

This central piece in the format of Sadir is indeed the most important and comprehensive item known for its dexterity as well as its artistic value. This breath taking number is equally challenging for the musicians of the dance troupe and more so the dancer, as it testifies to her artistic potentialities and technical virtuosity. Each of the foregoing genres, has invariably introduced one single element of dance. The (1) Alarippu - śuddha Nṛtta (2) Jatisvaram - Nṛtta and Raga or melody (3) Sabda - Nṛtta - Raga and Abhinaya. In varnam, we find the mature and harmonious exemplary combination of all these three elements of dance activity, the pure dance, the interpretative dance and the expressive dance marking the judicious blend of the essentials of music and dance - Bhava. Raga and Tala. "The word ‘varnam’ is probably a shortened form of ‘varnanam’ meaning definitive description and the term also denotes letter or character of the syllable, colour, class etc."(1) In addition to this definition the melodic movement or ganakriya is also referred to as Varna(2). From this it can be inferred that varna was more a musical form, delineating melodic structure of the raga and its elaborations. It is quite natural for


(2) Dr. S. Seetha - *Tanjore As a Seat of Music* - University of Madras - P.310
most of the dance musical forms to have evolved from the realm of art music and varna seems no exception to this phenomenon as it might have been adapted as dance musical form by effecting slight modifications to suit the dance activity in general and in accentuating the rhythmic, poetic as well as the melodic aspects of the composition in particular.

Varnam and its anatomical structure:- The thematic content of the varnam is often pivoted round the vipralamba Śṛṅgāra (separation of lovers) which has also been the predominant type of sṛngara and mainstay of the themes in most of the dance pieces. The hero or the Nayaka of varnams may be a deity, King or other chieftans and its initial section describes the glories and the qualities of the hero. Varnam being the complex item, has two parts or āṅgas. The former part is called the pūrvāṅga and the latter the uttarāṅga. The purvariga section consists of pallavi, anupallavi, muktayi or cittasvara and its corresponding Sahitya. The lyrical text of pallavi and anupallavi is sung in slow tempo compared to the uttarāṅga section. This facilitates the dancer to perform different sancari bhāvas relevant to the import of the poetic lines. For the first rendering of Pallavi line, the dancer standing in samapada stance, performs the subtle and graceful neck and eye movements and then stamping the ground with the feet, prepares herself for a breathtaking jati in three speeds known as Trikala jati. The phrasing of the jati is in the slow speed first, then the s'ollus of the first speed are doubled in the second speed and quadrupled in the third speed. The tongue-twisting tirmānam reeled off by the nattuvanar, matched by an equally meticulous foot work and scintilating body movements of the dancer give an eye filling experience to the onlookers and hence is the most awaited one in the varnams as it invests with special charm to the entire composition.
The beauty ushered out by Trikala tirmanam depends on the artistic and intricate rhythmic variations of jati and its perfect execution by the dancer briskly without sacrificing the ariga suddham or grace and precision of body movements at the expense of increasing speed. For each line of Pallavi and Anupallavi the dancer performs an elaborate jati which serves as connecting link between Sahitya passages. Every jati, including the Trikala jati ends with a brief rhythmic dance cadence called 'arudi' usually set to a single ṛavarta or one full time measure of a tāla. After the arudi to the trikala jati, the dancer moves to the centre of the stage to perform abhinaya for the sāhitya passages with the help of Angika, Sattvikabhinaya and Saṃcāris.* The composer's signature is normally found in the anupallavi section. This is followed by a solfa passage and its corresponding sāhitya called cittasvara and cittasvara sāhitya respectively. The cittasvara is also referred to as muktayisvara, as the term muktāyi means finale or that which occurs towards the end. Thus after the concluding part of muktayisvara Sahitya, the first line of Pallavi is once again rendered which gives a finishing touch to the purvanga section.

Before the uttarāṅga section is taken up, a brisk jati is performed and then the uttarāṅga section commences with a line of Sahitya known as carana also termed as Ettugada pallavi. The term 'ettu' in Kannada means commencement and in Telugu refers to start or lift. Ettugada pallavi when correlated with the sāhitya of the pallavi and anupallavi sections completes the intrinsic meaning and highlights the import of the Sahitya of the varnam. This take-off portion is followed by 3-4 svara passages with its matching sāhitya termed as caranasvara or Ettugada svara-sāhitya. Every Sahitya passage in the uttararīga section is concluded with the employment of 'tattimettadavu', where one finds the dancer simulta-

*Sancari is an elaboration of the implied meaning of the lyrical lines with the help of relevant episodes to create minor emotions in order to further the development of the durable state or sthāyībhāva
neously gesticulating with hastas and mukhajabhinaya and through foot
work (Tattimettadavu) establishes the rhythmic complexity of nrīta of
Bharatanatyam by changing the nadai and concludes with diditai adavu
or a variation of the adavu. In some varnams, the 'tattimettadavu' is
uniformly employed for all the Sahitya passages of the composition. After
the last caranasvara Sahitya, the carana is once again rendered which
brings varnam to a close.

There are three types of varnams namely Tana varnam, Pada varnam and
Ragamalika varnam.

I. Tana varnam: -

The term 'Ṭāṇa' refers to the exposition and elaboration of the raga
rendered in madhyamakāla with pleasing combinations of the solfa
syllables. Tanavarnam is a composition with minimal sāhitya that brings
out the raga laksana, fineness and the panoramic potential of the rāga
and are usually rendered in madhyama or druta kāla. The tana varnams
are more suitable for the art music for the following reasons : -

1. The prefix 'Ṭāṇa' is suggestive of the delineation and expo-
   sition of the raga in an elaborate manner in a medium tempo.
The aspect of tana rendering with the syllables Ta and Na is
quite popular in the musical concerts which are predominantly
employed due to its credibility in unraveling the possibilities
in the varied and extensive treatment of the raga through svara
sancaris or melodic structures.

2. Ṭāṇa varnams have minimal Sahitya passages comparatively to
   the size of its svara sections. Majority of the tana varnams
   are devoid of the corresponding Sahitya either to the muktayi
   svaras, carana svaras or both.
3. There is a customary practice of rendering Tana varnams in madhyamakāla or medium tempo or even at times in drutakāla or faster tempo, which not only restricts the leisurely gesticulation through abhinaya, for a dancer but on the other hand provides ample scope for the musician to portray the melodic grace and the raga svarūpa, which is the main spirit of the tana varnams.

II. Pada varnam:-

Like the term 'tana', the prefix 'pada' is self explanatory as it suggests the presence of Sahitya or the poetic text. Unlike Tana varnam, majority of the pada varnams incorporate Sahitya for all its regular sections and are rendered (Pallavi and Anupallavi sections) in slow tempo - vilambita kala or cauka kala, placing the dancer in a more advantageous position, enabling her to prove her worth in the field of expressive dance. Owing to its musical setting in slow tempo or cauka kala, the pada varnams are also known as cauka varnams. On a careful examination, we find that some of the important characteristic features of the padams are also showcased in the pada varnams. They are -

1. Having Sahitya for all the sections a) Pallavi b) Anupallavi c) Muktayi svara and d)carana and e)carana svaras.
2. Rendition of the pada varnam (pallavi and anupallavi) in a rather slow tempo, provides ample scope for the distribution of words in the lyric which indeed facilitates leisurely interpretation of the poetic lines, thereby establishing the mood of the thematic content. Perhaps, it is for these above mentioned aspects that the composition varnam is rightly named as pada varnam.
3. Most of the pada varnas share the erotic themes native to padas.
Significance of the pada varnam in the format of Sadir:-

Dance musical forms have been of receptive nature to take into its fold the best of the art musical pieces either in its entirety or by making suitable changes within its frame work and it seems that it is in the wake of this phenomenon that one can in all probability consider that pada varnam might have developed out of the TSNa varnam.

A noteworthy feature of the pada varnam is that it encapsulates the important ingredients present in its preceding numbers as well as the genres that are to follow it. Hence, it is known as the complex as well as a composite item running for nearly an hour and has been privileged as the most important and eagerly awaited number in the Bharatanatyam recitals.

Darus as mentioned earlier formed the major part of the repertoire of the Nayak and the post Nayak period until the second half of the 18th century. Such popular dance items were replaced by varnams which are more dexterous and elaborate in nature to the darus. Since varna is a long drawn-out item, there is abundant scope for the dancer to make patent the complexities and the manifold aspects inherent in the elements of dance such as Nrtta, Nrtya and Abhinaya. Unlike the other items in the format, the Padavarnam incorporates the rhythmic, poetic as well as the melodic aspects in equal measure.

The Tanjore brothers with innovative bent of mind, gave a thrust to the varnams, with the sole aim of assigning the status to the composition in the recital based programme on par with the karnatic music katcheri paddhati.

Any thing new need not be catchy and captivating, but varnams, the innovation of the 18th century, became highly popular during the period and it was further embellished at the hands of many eminent Vaggeyakaras,
master musicians and dance masters like Tanjore Quartette. Among the royal composers Rāja Serfoji-II and Maharaja Svati Tirunāl have composed several pada varnams.

III. Rāgamālika Varnam:
Rāgamālika varnams also can be placed in the category of the pada varnams, except that some of the rāgamālika varnams have different ragas, each for its Pallavi, Anupallavi, Cittasvara, Carana and the Caranasvaras. There are varnams in which only the last carana svara passage is set to ragamalika. Example:- The pada varnam “Sumasāyaka Vidura” set to Kapi raga and riipaka tāla in Sanskrit composed by Mahārāja Svati Tirunal, employs Kalyani, Khamās, Vasanta, Mōhanam, culminating with Kipi raga, for its last caranasvara portion.

Svarajati:- The structure and the thematic content of Svarajatis are akin to varnams except that the Cittasvara section of Svarajati has a line of Sollus interspersed with the svaras which are to be musically rendered on the lines of the svara passage.

Owing to its similarity with the varnams, svarajatis are often performed in place of the varnam. Several varnams and svarajatis composed by Tanjore Quartette have become popular numbers not only in the recitals of Bharatanatyam but also in other South Indian dance styles.

(5) Pada :- The term pada is generally used to connote a word or meaningful verse. Bharata in his Nātyasāstra refers to Pada as a 'Verbaltheme' in the context of defining the characteristics of the Gandharva music. Poet Kālidāsa in his 'Mēghasandēsām' has stated that setting meaningful words (sāhitya) to music and writing meaningful

Sahitya to the already set music as pada-” Viracita padam gēyamudgātukāmā”\(^{(1)}\).

According to 'Prabandha Adhyaya' of Sangita Ratnākaram, a prabhandha comprises six elements - Svara, Tala, Biruda, Pada, Tenaka and Pata. "The Sahitya that provided the Mātu* was Pada"\(^{(2)}\). But lateron the entire composition inclusive of Dhatu and Matu came to be known as pada. With the passage of time, based on this concept, the compositions of Purandaradāsa and Annamacarya were given the general name 'Pada'. Irrespective of its connotation, pada as a dance musical composition is predominant in snigara rasa or erotic sentiment which mirrors the delicate shades of Nayika - Nayaka bhavas in different situations.

Padas serve as illustrative examples to the theory if aesthetics with regard to the different classifications of the heroines and the heroes and not the least, the types of Dutis or messengers sent on a mission to convey the feelings evoked by love.

All such passionate expressions are only suggestive and are symbolically personified, as the yearning of the individual soul to get united with the supreme. Hence, the thematic content of most of the padas saturated with such sublime eroticism has truly elevated the dance number to the level of highest art of divine origin. Yet, it is not true to say that the entire stock of padas available, enshrine such lofty aspects as there are padas which portray carnal śṛṅgāra and are extremely sensuous and kindle baser instincts.

In addition to śṛṅgāra, there are padas dealing with the themes based

- The terms 'Matu & Dhatu' signify the Sahitya or libretto and the music of the composition respectively.

\(^{(1)}\) Dr.V.Raghavan - Nātvakalai - Kalaimagal publications - 1974 - Madras - P.70 - 71.

on bhakti, vairagya, maṅgaḷa, bhava and niti aspects. King Sāhaji-II's padas referred to as Tyagesa padas are replete with such themes.

Nevertheless padas are unique for its' soulful music and its' deceptively slow tempo facilitate the distribution of the words in Sahitya, which hitherto caters to the leisurely depiction of interesting possibilities and varied ideas inherent and relevant to the theme. The sāhitya of the padas invariably dictates the undulation in musical motion and this intum enhances the emotional appeal and lyrical beauty of the composition.

Like varnas, the descriptive nature of the libretto of the padas are equally demanding for the artists to prove their histrionic potentialities, the range of imaginative vision in exploring varied meaningful interpretations of the lyrical lines of the composition and importantly the ability to effectively portray the emotional state of the Nayika and Nayaka of the respective padas dealt with.

The structure of this composition consists of pallavi, anupallavi followed by 2-3 carana sections. "The credit of pioneering the three section composition goes to the Tallapakam fraternity - Annamācārya, Cinnayya and Perayya"(1).

In the padas whether Pallavi or Anupallavi, which ever is taken up first, the lyrical idea and motif is introduced and is further elaborated in the next ensuing section. In the carana sections, the resonant mood and sentiment encased in the Sahitya gets fully established. The credentials of tāla playing an undertone function and the absence of Svara and Sollu (rhythmic mnemonics) passages are highly useful in developing the theme and expouding the real import enshrined in it.

(1) R. Raṅgarāmānuja Ayyangar - Sangita Ratnakaram - A Study - P151.
Hence, padas create the visual pictures of the variegated emotions experienced by the human soul.

**Javali** :- Javalis are considered as the lighter Variants of a Pada. The thematic content of most of the Javalis deals with *srṅgāra* more of a sensuous nature as the Nayaka of these love lyrics, unlike padas, is very often a king or patron. Hence the concept of Madhura bhakti may not always find a place in Jāvalis. The term 'Javali', a derivative of Kannada word, is construed as a kind of lewd poetry. There is a general inference that the literary motif of most of the Javali compositions indulges in the Nayika making unsophisticated invitations to amorous deeds or that the different states of love are interpreted in an erotic manner often employing language that is more of colloquial nature. But such an explanation need not necessarily be true in its entirety. As there are padas which portray carnal srṅgara so also we find Javalis which treat the theme of love in a dignified and respectable way (gaurava srṅgāra).

Javalis have good entertainment value and a definite appeal in the dance recitals as these mundane love lyrics are garbed in captivating rakti ragas and unlike padas are often rendered in medium or faster tempo, which gives a fillip to the recital after a long spun out pada. In corroboration of this, there is an observation regarding the origin of the term Javali, according to which the term “Jāva in Sanskrit means speed and that Javali will mean song born of with speed”

Javalis also have all the three regular sections Pallavi, Anupallavi and carana consisting of one or more Sahitya passages. But certain javali compositions are devoid of the Anupallavi

---

(1) *Sruti* - South Indian music and dance magazine, issue No.86,1991.
section. It is of the opinion that Javali as composition evolved during the 19th century. We find rich output of Javalis composed in several languages Viz., Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil as well as in English.

Tillana :- After a protracted expressive dance numbers, Tillana gives further boost to the tempo of the dance.

Tillanas came to be composed during the 18th century and perhaps the earliest known composer of Tillana was Melattūr Virabhadrayya. Tillānās became highly popular during the Maratha period and were said to have emerged from the Hindustani musical form called Tarana.

Since Tillana is a compositions made up of patas or rhythmic syllables, it gives sufficient room to the possibility of this genre to have evolved out of the pata or one of the six constituent aṅgas of a prabandha composition. The composition of a Tillana has three sections - Pallavi, Anupallavi and a carana. The pallavi and Anupallavi sections consist of Jatis which incorporate the name of the composition in the wordings viz., tillana dhitillana and so on. Compared to the Anupallavi, the Pallavi assumes greater significance as it is repeated several times to which the dancer performs the 'mey adavus' or the movements involving the skillfull employment of the angas (major limbs of the body) and upaṅgas (minor limbs of the face) in the initial sequence followed by the execution of beautiful korvais or nrutta sequences evolved out of the combinations of various adavus which are performed with exacting geometric precision and deft foot work. The carana comprises, a brief passage of Sahitya which incorporates the signature of the composer. The Sahitya is usually eulogistic of either the deity, king or patron of art. The concluding section of the carana is once again a short jati which gives a crowing effect to the entire dance number. The Tillanas occasionally employ
svaras that are interwoven with the jatis. Owing to the presence of jati, svara and Sahitya in the libretto, some of the Tillanas are compared to the Jakkini darus which are presumed to be the precursors to the present Tillanas. Such a comparison does not seem to be totally appropriate since the svara passages of Jakkini darus are elaborate and unique unlike its insignificant place in the Tillānās which have svaras interspersed with jatis.

Tillanas set to captivating ragas are normally performed in the quick tempo. The beauty of Tillana is emanated from the manifold variations of different adavus, some of which are punctuated with sculptures que poses. But it should be remembered that ample use of such iconographic poses may on the contrary jeopardize the effectiveness of this scintillating number.

Indeed these lovely and lively items are known for its pleasing melody and rhythmic brilliance.

**Slokam** :- The format of Sadir-Bharatanatyam comes to an end with abhinaya performed to the slokas or verses that are usually rendered in ragamalika. Slokam belongs to the Anibaddha type and hence it is not conformed to any specific time measure.

Normally the prose passages culled out from puranic lore depicting various episodes glorifying the deeds of gods, form the text of the slokam. Episodes capable of evoking Nava rasas or nine sentiments are often attempted in which each of the rasas clothed in the verse is set to an appropriate raga that goes in tune with the rasa to be produced. Slokam in the present day recitals has become an optional item and mangalam is rendered to which the dancer offers her obeisance to the gods, and pays respects to the members of the orchestra and the audiences. With this propitious finale the recital comes to an end.
The following table gives a comparative study of the format of Nirupana and the format of Sadir systematised by the Tanjore Quartette.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Format of Nirupana</th>
<th>The Format of Sadir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Followed the single theme (Ekartha) concept using single raga and tāla.</td>
<td>Adopted different themes or Prthgārtha type for the dance numbers set to varied ragas and tālas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Tōdayamaṅgalam</strong> or Ganēsa Stuti.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Jaya Jaya</td>
<td>Stuti in praise of gods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Saranu</td>
<td>Alarippu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alārū</strong></td>
<td>Jatisvaram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) <strong>Sollu</strong></td>
<td>Pure dance (Nṛtta) performed to the accompaniment of rhythmic syllables or Sollus that are recited musically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure dance (Nṛtta) performed</td>
<td>Each of the four lines of the Sahitya is interspersed between short jati sequences and the last line of the Sahitya invariably ends with the salutary verse 'Sallamure' or 'Namostute'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the accompaniment of rhythmic</td>
<td>Varnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syllables or Sollus that are recited</td>
<td>Akin to the structure of Varnam of Nirupana, but the angas are given definite names throughout the composition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musically.</td>
<td>Purely an abhinaya composition, devoid of svaras. Even the svarapadas donot incorporate the svara passage in its structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Sabda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sahitya consists of 4 lines which</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is couched in between brief Sollu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passages called Sabda. The lyrical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lines do not end with the salutary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verse 'Sallamure'.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Varnam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The different arigas or sections are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uniformly named as Sahitya and Svara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respectively.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Pada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Svara passage in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between Anupallavi and carana section.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(8) Svarajati
Consists of five to six alternating svara and Sahitya passages.

(9) Abhinaya pada
(10) Tillānā
(11) Abhinaya pada

(12) Jakkini
(13) Gita
(14) Prabandha
(15) Triputa
(16) Sloka Varna
   consists of Sahitya followed by a Svara passage set to raga and tala.

(17) Kautta

(18) Mangale

The Svarajatis are akin to the varnams in its structural frame work but the cittasvara of svarajatis has a line of Sollu which are rendered musically like the 'Sollus' of the Nirupana.

Pada

Tillānā

The format has only one pada but Javali which is also an abhinaya item like pada but treating the theme of love in a lighter vein, is performed before Tillānā.

They do not find a place in the format.

Slokam
constitutes verses that are generally rendered in rāgamālika but do not conform to any specific tala or time measure.

Kavuttuvam - Though it belongs to the realm of temple ritualistic dances, it is also performed as the preliminary item in the present Bharatanatyam recitals. Kavuttuvam is similar to the kautta, as it comprises both sollukattu and Sahitya.

Maṅgalam
Hence, the origin of some of the dance numbers figuring in the Sadir Katcheri are traceable to very distant past. The format has been ever changing since the times of Chola, Nayak upto the Maratha period. From the foregoing analysis and a comparative study of the Nirupana and Sadir format, it can be construed that the Nirupana format was crystallised and systematised by the Tanjore Quartette into Sadir - format which is being followed even today in the Bharatanatyam recitals. Though Tanjore Quartette did not bring about any seminal changes, they effected certain qualitative and quantitative changes such as -

1. Quantitative change :- Reducing the number of the items, thereby minimising the duration of the recital.
2. Avoided the duplication of items in the format.
3. Qualitative change:- Retaining the essentials of the Nirūpana, the format gave a new look without diluting its quality.
4. By adopting different themes, ragas and tālas to the compositions, dispensed the monotony experienced in the Nirūpana.
5. The refined format exhilarated the dance recital acclaiming the status enjoyed by the chamber music.

Hence, it demonstrates that the Tanjore Quartette after examining and critically evaluating the format of Nirupana, have launched the Sadir format which remains with undiminished importance till date.